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WINNING TO CHRIST

P. F. BURROUGHS, D.D.

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WINNING TO CHRIST

A STUDY IN EVANGELISM

Take heed to thyself, and to thy teaching. Continue in these things; for in doing this thou shall save both thyself and them that hear thee. 1 Timothy 4: 16.

P. E. BURROUGHS, D.D.
Educational Secretary

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ISSUED UNDER

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New Liberty, Ky.
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SEVENTH BOOK

A WORD OF EXPLANATION.

THE awakened interest in all phases of personal and practical evangelism and the eager quest for helps which may increase efficiency in the winning of souls and the culture of lives, embolden the writer to offer the message of these pages and inspire the hope that this message will meet a sympathetic reception. While the conception of this treatment and the body of its material were wrought out in days of pastoral evangelism and teaching, these chapters have been written primarily in response to the desire of the Sunday school field workers of the Southern Baptist Convention, as expressed through their normal course committee, for a brief teachable treatise on the fundamentals of culture and conversion.

The discussions embrace a cycle of teaching, five closely related themes being studied: (1) The child's natural spiritual state, as vital and basal in all evangelistic and character-building efforts; (2) lines of training and teaching which prepare the way for conversion; (3) means and methods in evangelism; (4) lines of instruction concerning the church and its ordinances and methods of securing early and permanent church alignment; (5) teaching and training which will lead to rounded personal and denominational development.

We have a rich and abundant literature on all of these subjects, the works of the fathers being supplemented by contributions from many modern writers. Our apology for assuming to add to this literature is fourfold: (1) There seems to be need for a continuous and connected statement concerning these successive and

closely related steps; (2) it seems desirable that this statement shall be compact and brief so as to bring the entire treatment within the reach of busy workers; (3) the body of teaching in these lines should be cast in such form as will enable parents and teachers to master it and to pass it on to others, such form as will yield itself to drill and catechism purposes so that the material may be readily taught to children and young people; (4) in these days of hesitant and unsatisfactory teaching concerning certain fundamentals, such as the essential sinfulness and need of the child, the necessity for repentance, faith and a new birth, it seems worth while to set forth and emphasize these as they are most surely believed among us according to the Scriptures. The serving of any one of these ends would seem to justify the issuance of a new treatise, and the hope that all four of these purposes may in some measure be met emboldens us to offer this contribution.

The whole world is studying the child. The whole Christian world is studying the child from the viewpoint of the kingdom of God. A supreme test of any system of theology is the word it speaks here. The supreme question for today and for coming days is the question of the child, his estate by nature and the changes necessary in order that he may enter the kingdom of grace, together with the means by which such changes may be wrought. A ceaseless stream of literature is issuing from the press which teaches the attractive but deadly doctrine that the child is born in the kingdom of God, and requires only Christian culture in order to be a Christian. The commanding problem of the church and Sunday school life of our day is the problem of the child, the problem of interpreting the child nature in the light of the atonement and of interpreting the atonement in its message for the child.

The subjects treated in the Convention Normal Course are Sunday school organization, pupil-study, teaching, doctrines and Bible. Ample and varied as this curriculum must seem, it has been deemed insufficient for the instruction and guidance of Christian workers without a treatise on evangelism, which in the large sense herein viewed stands central in all Christian thought and effort. Thus this Normal Course is rounded out into a comprehensive system of practical and doctrinal teaching for all types of religious workers.

The book constitutes a section in the Convention Normal Course and for its study after the manner herein set forth a seal is to be awarded for the normal diploma. Each chapter will probably constitute a suitable lesson assignment, and at the close of each chapter questions are printed to guide and test lesson study. Questions at the close of the book are designed for a general review, and normal course students will submit to a written examination in accordance with the printed instructions.

It is hoped that the book may serve a wider purpose. Believers may find it helpful as inspirational and devotional reading. The pastor may form classes for the study of selected portions in preparation for a coming revival effort, or he may use it as the basis of devotional study for some weeks in the prayer meeting. Young peoples' societies and organized classes which aspire to usefulness in soul-winning may wish to pursue these studies. The evangelist may draw together an inner circle each day during revival meetings for a study and discussion of the doctrines and methods herein stated. Anxious parents and perplexed teachers may find here some helpful hints for guidance in the delicate and difficult tasks which come to their hands, and they may be able to use certain portions as a

catechism for the instruction of the children intrusted to their care.

In this, as in all the books of the Convention Normal Course, it is assumed that our homes and our churches are primarily educational institutions. In his function of teacher, the teacher of all his teachers, the pastor is to come into his largest sphere of power. The parent is to teach; the home is to be a center for instruction. The church and the church school are to teach; the B. Y. P. U. is to teach; and all are to teach in the widest realms of doctrine and of life. If this effort to state some vital things touching young life shall in any measure serve to guide or help some in the great army of our King to be better teachers, the author will count this ample compensation for any labors which may have been expended in the preparation of these chapters.

P. E. B.

WINNING TO CHRIST.

I.

WHAT WE PROPOSE.

MANY phrases have suggested themselves as possible designations for these studies. A brief glance at these phrases with a statement of the reason why each was rejected and why "Winning to Christ" is chosen will indicate the scope of study which is here proposed.

Evangelism has been considered. Strictly speaking, evangelism means winning to Christ by a proclamation of the evangel, the good news of the Christ. It carries the idea of the simple process of bringing to Christ; it speaks of the glorious work of bringing to discipleship, of the initial bringing into the kingdom of grace. It can hardly be said to embrace the preparatory processes which are essential to an early and full surrender to Christ, as it does not include the later measures of training and culture which are essential to the rounded completeness of Christian life and character.

The phrase does not serve our present purpose for the reason that we wish to include a study

both of the preparatory steps and of the later processes of care and culture. Certainly conversion, the initial coming to Christ, is a central and vital point, but we would consider also the influences and training which pave the way for conversion, together with the early experiences and training which go to make possible the best fruits of conversion. In a word, we would study the whole rounded process of "Winning to Christ." We aspire to win to Christ the whole nature with all of its powers and possibilities. While the phrase "Evangelism" is thus hardly adequate to set forth the purpose of our present studies, yet the word is so significant and widely used, and that for which it stands so strikes at the heart of what we desire, we shall find ourselves frequently employing it.

Sunday School Evangelism has been proposed. In any study of "Winning to Christ" the Sunday school must have special consideration. An enlarged place and emphasis the Sunday school has come to hold in all soul-winning effort. And yet we require here a right perspective giving to all agencies and elements proper place and emphasis.

While the personal element must predominate in all evangelistic effort, and surely we do well to insist upon personal evangelism, yet there are three divinely given institutions which contribute to evangelism—the home, the Sunday school and

the church. Normally, the home is the mightiest factor. It has the child in the early, plastic years almost exclusively. Its silent and persistent influence is all but irresistible. It is for the home to give the earliest bent and bias toward God. The influence of a Christian father and mother may count for more toward conversion than all teachers and schools, all preachers and churches, more than all other individuals or institutions. The Sunday school, the connecting link between the home and the church, further plants the seed of the gospel. Touching the home on the one side, it supplements its instructions and appeals; touching the church on the other side, it seeks to prepare the life for its sacred service. Finally, the church comes in with its glorious word of atonement and its message of life in Jesus, and reaps in salvation the harvest which has been preparing in the work of the home and the Sunday school.

Certainly it is possible to conceive of conversion with one or another of these elements lacking. Men are saved who received no Christian impress in the home; men are converted who never knew the blessing of the Sunday school; men are sometimes brought to Christ when other influences than the church seem to operate for their salvation. But we cannot "win to Christ" in the best and largest sense without the coöperation of these three agencies. It is possible to

bring to a decision for Christ in the home or in the Sunday school, though it seems good to let the home and the Sunday school stand in line as contributing and preparatory agencies and to bring the lost to a confession of Jesus as Saviour and Lord in the fine atmosphere of the morning or evening worship when the whole congregation is gathered before the Lord. So it falls out that while we propose to magnify the Sunday school and give it due emphasis in this mighty work, Sunday school evangelism is hardly adequate to set forth our real task.

Educational Evangelism. has been suggested. Two elements are essential in soul-winning efforts, education and evangelistic effort. When a soul surrenders to Christ in a blessed experience of grace, such surrender comes through a twofold process, educational preparation and the revival influence. The education to which we refer may be imparted in an endless variety of ways; it may be by passive influence or by active teaching; or, better, by both of them; it is safe to say that no soul ever comes to Christ without some such preparation, and in the light of Scripture example and precept it is safe to insist upon the place and meaning of the educational element. It is further true that no soul can come to Christ save through the revival influence. As with education, so with the revival, it may come in a variety of forms and with various manifestations.

The revival may or may not involve a protracted meeting. Whenever and wherever a soul is saved, there is a revival, a revival effort, a revival atmosphere, a revival fruit. Educational evangelism, as emphasizing the necessary educational processes in soul-winning, is well enough. But if educational evangelism is to obscure the revival element and to eclipse the special and glorious work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration, it becomes a delusion offering a stone instead of bread.

Because educational evangelism may seem to give scant emphasis to the special evangelistic element, the high and mighty work of grace in the heart, it is not quite acceptable as describing our task.

Child Evangelism. So far as distinction may be properly made, we will approach evangelism from the viewpoint of the child rather than from that of the adult. Such approach is natural and normal. At the same time we must insist that in its essentials, in its final analysis, child evangelism is not different from adult evangelism. Some one has said, "The New Testament is a book dealing almost entirely with adults." Rather let us say that the New Testament deals with man as man, without regard to age or condition. It is universal in its message and scope. The conditions precedent to baptism are such as are suitable and inevitable for all who come to baptism.

Awhile ago only adult conversion was believed in or sought, and it was scarcely believed that a child could be saved. The word to the child seemed to be, "Except ye be converted and become as a grown man ye cannot enter the kingdom of heaven." Little effort was made for the conversion of children, and a wide-spread skepticism existed as to the genuineness of child conversion. Now the pendulum has swung back the other way. Everybody believes in the possibility and necessity of child conversion, while some have almost come to question whether we can any longer win men and women. An eminent minister said awhile ago, "In my early days there seemed to be a question as to whether children could be really converted; now there seems to be some question as to whether anybody besides children can be converted." It is well to remind ourselves that the same Lord who took little children in his arms and blessed them also came to seek and to save that which was lost, that he gathered about him publicans and sinners, giving himself and delivering his message to sinful men. "Only by deserting the method of the Master can we give the conversion of mature men, yes, of hardened sinners, a secondary place in our expectations and Christian efforts."

The conversion of a child may differ widely from the conversion of a man, as the conversion of a given man may differ widely from the con-

version of another man. The experience of a child is usually different from that of an adult in the depth of feeling and in many other particulars, but we do well to lay it to heart that the essentials are in either case the same. Our Lord did not make two atonements, one for the child and another for the man. There were not wrought out two plans of salvation, one for the child and one for the adult. There are not two processes by which we are to come into the kingdom of God, one for children and one for mature people. Insidious peril lurks in the tendency to regard *child* evangelism as an essentially distinct type of evangelism, and to consider the child as somehow possessing inherent innocence which, if it does make conversion unnecessary, yet makes salvation possible to the child on some easier basis than to the adult.

The Scriptures bring us the conditions of salvation with no hint of distinction between child and adult or between man and man. "There is no difference; for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3: 22, 23). "But as many as *received him,* to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1: 12).

Child evangelism, as indicating and magnifying the winning of children is well enough, but *child* evangelism as hinting that the need and experience of the child is in any essential different

from the need and experience of the adult is not for a moment to be accepted. We will approach the great question of winning to Christ from its normal and natural viewpoint, that of the child in unfolding life, but we will demand and expect conviction for sin, repentance and faith, regeneration; in a word, all the constituent elements which enter into any experience of grace.

Soul-winning. This phrase is widely used and expressive. Certainly it may be said that we are concerned to save lives, not simply to save souls; our commission is to deal with the whole man, the man physically and mentally, no less than the man spiritually. The gospel is not meant alone to cure ills and aches of the heart and wounds of the soul, but to sweeten and save the whole man. It is not simply an insurance company by which we are to be guaranteed immunity in death and safety in eternity. It is not merely a transportation agency by which we are to have safe transfer from this life to realms of bliss. Our gospel proposes to save *men,* to save the whole man, here, in time, and this to the end that he may be saved in eternity.

Yet we may not forget that the gospel in saving men deals primarily with sin and concerns itself first of all with the soul. It will sweeten and bless the whole life by cleansing the inward life from sin. It deals primarily with the soul, the spirit, where sin dwells and whence are the

fountains of life. True, it is not merely an insurance against loss at death, but it is such insurance. It is not simply an agency for safe transfer to heaven when this life ends. Yet it is such an agency. Successful evangelism is based on the conviction that the gospel saves in the crisis of death and the judgment, that it gives sure entrance into the presence of God.

If we will purify and sweeten the life we must first see that the soul, the deep inward source of life, is purified and sweetened. Sin in the soul is the source of all the real ills of life. The gospel deals primarily with sin and begins by saving the soul. "The soul of all improvement is the improvement of the soul." While the phrase, "soul-winning," is hardly adequate to set forth the whole work of the Christ in the life, and hence is hardly sufficient to describe our present task, it yet strikes at the heart of that work.

Winning to Christ. In this phrase we have both evangelism and culture, both education and the revival, soul-winning and all that accompanies soul-winning. Our real task is to win to Christ, to win and save the whole life with all its elements and powers to the kingdom and service of God. This phrase faces out toward all life, the child and the adult alike. "Win" is a good scriptural phrase. It implies what must never be obscured or forgot, that men are from

birth alienated from God and must be won. "He that is wise winneth souls" (Prov. 11 : 30). The word here used is suggestive. It is taken from the hunter's craft and literally means "ensnareth," "taketh alive." Sinful souls, wandered and alienated from God, must be ensnared, taken alive, and delivered back to God. It is this large, rounded task of "Winning to Christ" which we are to study together in these pages, evangelism together with the preceding processes of preparation and the succeeding processes of training.

RESTATEMENT.

What We Propose.

A study of—

I. Evangelism?
   Hardly adequate.

II. Sunday School Evangelism?
   Not a full perspective.

III. Educational Evangelism?
   Hardly sufficient.

IV. Child Evangelism?
   Inadequate.

V. Soul-winning?
   Hardly sufficient.

VI. Winning to Christ!
   Both adequate and sufficient, setting forth the studies which we propose.

To Guide and Test Study.

What is evangelism? Why is the phrase inadequate to describe our present scope of study?

What institutions especially contribute to evangelism? Which should be the greatest factor? Why?

What two elements are essential in the soul-winning process? Why is educational evangelism hardly acceptable as defining our task?

State the things in which child evangelism and adult evangelism are not different. In what are they different? What change has come in the attitude toward child conversion? What should be our attitude toward the conversion of adults? Why is child evangelism insufficient to describe our task?

In what sense does the phrase "soul-winning" appear to be inadequate? How far may we press this objection?

What advantages has the phrase "winning to Christ"? What is the significance of the word "win"?

II.

WHY STUDY WINNING TO CHRIST?

THIS theme must command the attention and thought of pastors, Sunday school workers, Christian parents and all who love the Lord Jesus. Among the many and commanding reasons why this study is worth our while, we can name only a few of the more important and comprehensive. We should study "Winning to Christ" (1) because this task is supreme and supremely glorious; (2) because of the place which "Winning to Christ" holds in the Sunday school; (3) because of the place which the Sunday school holds in "Winning to Christ"; (4) because "Winning to Christ" is an art, a fine art, which, having its own laws, requires intelligent effort; (5) because the study and practice of evangelism brings us into the Holy of Holies of all spiritual service.

The task of winning to Christ is supreme and supremely glorious. We are saved in order that we may save; we are ourselves chosen and redeemed through divine love that we may win others to love the great Saviour and to know the great salvation. Beyond all controversy the supreme end of every Christian life is somehow, somewhere, to fit into God's mighty plan to save

men. As winning to Christ is supreme in individual life, so also is it preëminent in the mission of the churches of our Lord Jesus. And this work is supremely glorious. It engages the thought and employs the effort of the triune God; the Father planned it, the Son executed the eternal plan; while the Spirit applies the atoning work of the Christ. This work engages the attention and commands the interest of the unfallen angels and the hosts of the redeemed. As the saints and the angels look down upon the affairs of men and view this earth, they are not so much interested in political revolutions, in ebbs and flows in the financial world, in social upheavals, as they are concerned for God's mighty redemptive work among the sons of men.

Winning to Christ holds the supreme place in the Sunday school. Evangelism in the broad sense in which we use the phrase stands central in the Sunday school. Beyond all question the business of the Sunday school is "winning to Christ." This is our task, first to bring to simple surrender to Christ and acceptance of Him as Saviour, then to bring the whole life into harmony with his will, to make men Christian in all the depth and sweetness of that term. Failing here, we have failed utterly. It is of little avail that our youth shall grow up to know the Bible if they do not come to know by a vital experience the Christ of the Bible. It is of little moment

that men shall come to know the frame work of Bible history if they are not to know the living Spirit which breathes in every part of that history. We have signally failed if having taught our youth the Ten Commandments of God, we do not bring them to know and obey the God of the Ten Commandments; if having taught them to know the twelve disciples of our Lord, we do not bring them to know our Lord himself. Let all the estates of Israel, let all the forces of the home and the Sunday school, set forth this as a supreme goal, that the young life about us shall be redeemed by the blood and brought into complete subjection and conformity to the will of Christ.

Every worker in the Sunday school would do well to face quietly and candidly the question as to what in the work of the school shall have first place. Are there schools in which *numbers,* a great attendance, seems to hold first place in thought and effort? More is said of numbers and attendance than is said of bringing to Christ. More, and more persistent, effort is made to increase the membership than to win to Christ. Surely, it is good to be zealous for numbers and to seek by relentless effort to increase attendance, but in quietness and confidence the first place in thought and plan is to win to the Saviour.

Are there schools which are exhausting their energy in the effort to maintain an elaborate and

complicated machinery of organization? Organization is good, but it is a means to an end, and is never to be made an end in itself. The Sunday school, like the church, is made up of devout, simple-hearted folk, bent on a single and simple purpose. When organization becomes complex and irksome, consuming the efforts and energy of the school or of the church, it ceases to be a blessing and becomes a burden. Oxen are organized and put under a yoke not to increase but to lessen their loads. Horses are organized and put into harness not for the sake of the harness, but for the larger service they may render. Organization in proper form and within proper limits will make easier all the tasks and burdens of Sunday school and church life.

A man in Texas invented a cotton-picking machine. It was a notable achievement. Thousands of earnest men had bent their energies to this end and had failed. This man was elated over his success. Certain officials and government experts came to pass on the merits of the new machine. They looked it over, tested it, found it a perfect bit of machinery, wonderful and complete. They had only one fault to find —*it would not pick cotton.* Are there modern Sunday schools which bear some resemblance to that cotton-picking machine?

In many ways the preëminence of evangelism in the work of the Sunday school is being recog-

nized. The Standards of Efficiency erected by the various evangelical denominations now practically all take account of evangelism, requiring that it shall be emphasized and specifying that in the school special appeals shall be made to the unsaved to accept Christ; in the normal courses offered for the training of Sunday school workers this matter of winning to Christ is taking rank as a department of study with organization, psychology, teaching and missions.

The Sunday school holds large place in "winning to Christ." Two coöperative agencies must be relied on in the matter of evangelism, viz.: education and the revival or the evangelistic appeal. These two elements are not to be separated from each other. Any revivalism which should fail to take account of education and the many essential processes of preparation would be worthless; education which is not permeated with the purpose and spirit of evangelism is equally unavailing. "Let us evangelize our education and educationalize our evangelism."

The word is sometimes passed around that our day has witnessed a transfer from the old-time emphasis on the revival to a special emphasis on education. It is said that the revival is no longer a factor and that its day of usefulness has passed. True, in some churches where the evangelistic fires have died and possibly in some sections where love for souls has waned, the old-time

revival may have passed. True, also, that certain types of revival effort and method have passed, and should pass. But in the spiritual, as in the material, realm the law still holds, "While the earth remaineth, seed-time *and harvest* shall not cease." Down through Old Testament history and throughout the history of Christianity progress and advance have come through revivals. Much is said in favor of the perennial revival; Mr. Spurgeon and some others in exceptional circumstances and of exceptional ability have been able to maintain a continuous state of revival. But the perennial revival can, as a rule, be maintained only with the help of the occasional special revival effort. The notable instances of exception in Mr. Spurgeon and others only go to strengthen the general rule that God's law is seed-time *and harvest.*

As a matter of fact, is the revival really passing? A generation ago Mr. Moody stood out in some distinctness among the few really influential evangelists. We could easily name now a number of well-known evangelists who draw as large audiences and as completely move great cities as did Mr. Moody; only the name of sane and mighty evangelists is now legion. In a recent evangelistic conference held at the Moody school in Chicago, more than three hundred evangelists assembled to confer together about the things of the kingdom. The Southwestern Bap-

tist Theological Seminary has a chair of Evangelism, ably filled, and we have come on times when every preacher and pastor is expected to possess evangelistic ability and to engage constantly in soul-winning effort. We may change, and possibly improve, the old-time methods of revival work, but we will never be able to dispense with the old-time revival.

We would hardly care to say that our day is witnessing a transfer of emphasis from the revival to education. Let us rather say that there is increasing disposition to put emphasis on the processes of education and training which make possible a perennial revival. We are depending on quiet, persistent evangelism more than on special revival efforts. We are drawing our educational processes and our revival efforts closer together. Our educators, pastors, teachers and parents are becoming our evangelists. We have perhaps overworked the saying, "one soweth and another reapeth." God's plan is that sowing and reaping shall be simultaneous, that a man shall sow with one hand and reap with the other. Seedtime and harvest need not be widely separated. More and more, pastors are coming to be their own evangelists. Teachers and superintendents are coming to be their own revivalists. The workers who sow are at the same time quietly and persistently reaping. The Sunday school is the fruitful evangelistic opportunity.

The evangelism of tomorrow is to find here its mighty field. The Sunday school holds a first place of influence in the incoming tides of child-life, while through its adult class movement and its home department it is reaching and influencing adult life as no other agency can hope to do. Because the Sunday school is a preëminent evangelistic agency and opportunity, Sunday school workers ought to study the principles and methods of evangelism.

Winning to Christ is an art, the finest of the fine arts, which has its own laws and which requires intelligent effort. If the impression has prevailed that piety and fervor alone are essential, we may without depreciating these prime essentials, insist that no other art more imperatively calls for equipment and skill. It is true that any fervent soul may accomplish wonders here, but that soul might with skill won by training wield a far wider and safer influence in soul-winning. Here as elsewhere in Christian service, even a little instruction, starting aright and giving some guidance as to method and intelligent effort must be helpful.

It is impossible to estimate the harm done by untrained and misguided workers. The soul is peculiarly sensitive and impressionable in those days when it seeks through conviction and confession of sin to know its Lord. Error planted,

wrong bias or direction given, in that critical time may bear an evil harvest in all after years.

Winning to Christ leads us into the Holy of Holies of the spiritual life. It brings us to stand close beneath the shadow of the cross and to breathe its holy atmosphere. Superintendents and teachers who are winning Christ, know a high joy which enables them to surmount obstacles and overcome discouragements. The purpose and the effort to win to Christ lend a halo of glory to our tasks and makes service worth while. It pulls all of our Sunday school work up to a high plane. With only a half hour in the whole week in which to teach, the Sunday school teacher can never find his chief satisfaction in the amount of concrete information which he may be able to impart to his pupils. His real comfort will be in the assurance that the information he does impart may under the blessing of the divine Spirit be vital to temporal and spiritual welfare and that the truth he imparts may bless to all eternity.

A vision of the meaning of evangelism and an experience of the joys which come from winning the lost would transform many a Sunday school. Is it difficult to find among the great numbers of cultivated men and women in our churches those who will teach and bear the burdens of the Sunday school? Do those who teach lack joyful and triumphant zeal? Let the fires of evangelism

burn, let the community be pervaded by a quiet, gracious revival, let the workers get a vision of the meaning and matchless dignity of what we are doing as these things touch life and destiny, and all will be changed. Great hearts are drawn to great tasks; the higher and nobler the tasks we have in hand, the more surely will lofty spirits be inspired to undertake them.

RESTATEMENT.

Why Study Winning to Christ?

I. This task is supreme and supremely glorious.

II. The place which "Winning to Christ" holds in the Sunday school.

III. The place which the Sunday school holds in "Winning to Christ."

IV. Winning to Christ is an art, which, having its own laws, requires intelligent effort.

V. Winning to Christ brings us into the Holy of Holies of all spiritual service.

To Guide and Test Study.

Name five reasons why Christian workers should study "Winning to Christ."

Why is this task supreme? Why is it glorious?

What place does "Winning to Christ" hold in the Sunday school? Why?

Name some other things which may be given an undue emphasis as compared with "Winning to Christ."

Name some ways in which the importance of "Winning to Christ" is being recognized.

What of the place which the Sunday school holds in "Winning to Christ"?

Is the day of the revival passing? What of the transfer of emphasis from the revival to education?

What deduction is drawn from the fact that "Winning to Christ" is an art?

Discuss the statement that "Winning to Christ" leads us into the Holy of Holies. What will a right conviction here do for Sunday school workers?

III.

CULTURE VERSUS CONVERSION.

WINNING TO CHRIST! If we are to win to Christ we must have a clear conception of the human nature which we are to win; we must know its natural moral and spiritual condition, its state before God and its attitude toward God. The natural heart, what is its native attitude toward God, what does it require in order to enter into God's kingdom? Wrong thinking here will unhinge and vitiate all of our efforts to win. Right thinking at this point furnishes a safe basis for all future building.

Broadly speaking there are two theories concerning the child's natural condition and state. These theories divide the Christian world into two great camps. We may call these the culture theory and the conversion theory.

1. *The culture theory.* This theory denies the necessity of conversion and puts forward culture as the supreme need, the one thing essential, in the bringing of the life to a right relation to God. The advocates of the culture theory differ widely among themselves, four types being worthy of mention.

(1) Some deny the necessity of conversion and regeneration. Human nature, they say, is not

naturally sinful and tainted; rather it is essentially holy and God-like. The child is by nature God's child; he is from birth in the kingdom of God. He does not need to be brought into the kingdom; he requires to be kept from growing or going out of the kingdom. He is by nature rightly related to Christ, and so far from needing to be converted to Christ, our one concern should be to keep him from being converted from Christ. "Conversion is an event which ought not to be necessary in the conscious life of any human being."

A minister went to preach in a church in one of our cities on Sunday morning. Being present in the Sunday school, he was asked to speak to the junior department with its large number of boys and girls from nine to twelve years of age. He ventured to say a simple word about early coming to Christ and pleaded that the children should give their hearts in trust and obedience to the Saviour. He felt even while he was speaking that the superintendent did not sympathize with his word. As the visitor sat down the superintendent arose and said, "I regret that I cannot say 'Amen' to the message of our friend. You boys and girls are the children of the church; you were not born in the slums. You are by nature God's children; you were born in the kingdom of God. You do not need a new heart."

A little girl, under conviction for sin, and sorrowfully seeking the Saviour, was told by her

grandmother that she could join the church when she "became good enough." Clearly the grandmother had no thought of regeneration, a new heart through the birth from above, and was only thinking of culture and effort as bringing the child to be "good enough" to unite with the church.

(2) Yet others insist that the child receives a new heart in the act of baptism. In the directions for the administration of the ordinance of baptism to infants, certain official guide-books urge prayer to God, "that through his ordinance, of his bounteous mercy he will grant to the child that which by nature he cannot have." In the words which are to be uttered after the child's baptism it is assumed that having been baptized the child is now regenerated.

(3) But if children are regenerated in connection with baptism, this makes their salvation dependent on the obedience of their parents, and shuts out all children whose parents refuse or neglect to have them baptized, as well as all heathen children. This consideration has driven some to the position that God regenerates every child at birth. Compelled to recognize the fact of inherent sin in the natural heart, these maintain that by an act of sovereign mercy God regenerates every child in the hour of its birth.

(4) Yet others insist that regeneration is a gradual process accomplished by the Spirit of

God in connection with culture. "But before the years of full responsibility there is a religious change possible, and in many cases actual, which in a limited sense is worthy to be called conversion. It is the gradual change in the nature of the child, wrought directly by the Spirit of God in coöperation with prayerful, intelligent, persistent training on the part of parents and others whereby the tendency of the depraved nature is overcome and supplanted by a tendency to that which is good" (*Wm. George Koons*).

2. *The conversion theory.* This theory declares that all children are "in a state of sin, need to be regenerated and can only be saved through personal faith in Christ." Conversion is the human side of that change of heart which when viewed from God's side is called regeneration. Conversion is the soul's turning to God from sin.

If we will know the child's state and his real condition before God, we must bring the child into the clear light of God's holiness and study his nature as God has set it forth in his Word. To the law and the testimony! What saith the Word?

"The carnal (natural) mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. 8:7).

"Behold I was shapen in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Psalm 51:5).

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3: 6).

"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except one be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3: 3).

"Born anew," not "altered," "influenced," "reinvigorated," "reformed;" but a new beginning, a new stamp of character, a new family likeness to God and to his children (*A. H. Strong*).

Such is the explicit testimony of Scripture as to the natural state. What says the voice of conscience and of experience? When we look into the depths of our own hearts and study our own experiences as we came through the years of childhood, surely the voice of conscience and of experience corroborates the word of Scripture. Whatever comes out naturally and inevitably in the oak must be somehow in the acorn. Whatever naturally and inevitably comes out in the man must be somehow in the child. Spiritual depravity, insubordination, unholiness, always appear in the man. These must, therefore, be somehow in the child.

The voice of Scripture agrees with the voice of conscience and experience and these agree with the witness of observation, all declaring that human nature, whether in the child or adult, is fallen and marred and requires the regenerating grace of God.

To sum up and for the sake of further clearness, we may lay down the following propositions:

The supreme need is not Preservation. The idea is going the rounds, and is somehow insistent, that the only evangelism needed is preservation.

A primary department in a certain Sunday school is beautiful and beautifully fitted. The superintendent walks out of the department and meets the minister, who says, "What of your department?" The superintendent replies, "All is well, only I am sick and tired of having visitors say, 'This is all beautiful, but what of the change of heart; have your children experienced a change of heart?'" She stamped her foot impatiently and said, "My children are pure and holy; they do not need a change of heart." The minister said, "You are altogether right. Let us pray together that they may never have a change of heart, that they may be always as they are now, pure and holy."

If we have been to the Cross, whether we came as children or as adults, there is little need to interpose objections to this theory. We who know Christ in his atoning death, who through an experience of grace have tasted the sweets of pardoning love and have known the joy of sin forgiven, know that preservation is not sufficient. This theory of preservation obscures God's holi-

ness and denies sin. It denies the necessity of the atonement and does away with the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. Alas for our poor fallen nature, something more is needed than preservation!

It may be proper to say in passing that the evangelism for which we plead is not versus preservation. While we insist that preservation is not alone sufficient, we would not underestimate its power and value in the molding of life and in winning to Christ. So far from there being antagonism between conversion and preservation, they are both essential and are both interdependent. Faithful and careful preservation from ways and habits of evil paves the way for early conversion, while early conversion is essential to further preservation.

The supreme need is not Culture. There are those who would have us believe that the human heart is "a green apple which only needs careful and favorable cultivation for its proper ripening." The Scriptures already adduced, and surely the witness of our own experience, declare that the natural heart is an apple with a worm at the core and that nothing but the blood of Jesus can destroy that worm and make that nature holy. Likewise, there are those who would have us believe that human nature is a seed which needs only to be planted and nurtured in order to produce ripened fruit. Alas we know that human

nature is a damaged seed and that which grows from it will, like itself, inevitably be poor and stunted (*A. H. Strong*).

"It is not evolution that is needed, but involution and revolution: involution, the communication of a new life, and revolution, the change of direction resulting from that life."

Two notable examples in the New Testament illustrate the futility and insufficiency of culture. Nicodemus was as finished a moral specimen as the world ever saw. Culture and education had done for him their best. To this man, the finished product of culture, Jesus said, "Ye must be born again." The rich young ruler was another finished product of culture, so fair and so fine that when Jesus looked upon him, He loved him. To this finished specimen of culture Jesus said, "One thing thou lackest," and what he lacked was not to sell his goods, but was to accept and follow Jesus. Because his goods stood between him and Jesus, he was commanded to sell his goods.

The advocates of these two theories, preservation and culture, rely largely upon one passage of Scripture which passage they utterly misinterpret, "Verily, I say unto you, except ye be converted and become as a little child, ye cannot enter the kingdom of heaven." What Jesus has in mind is not the innate and essential nature of the child, but rather the child's predominant characteristic, its trust, dependence, confidence.

Except ye convert and become in spirit as a little child, trustful and dependent, ye cannot enter the kingdom of heaven.

It may be well to say in passing, that while the evangelism for which we plead and which the child needs is not culture, that it is yet not versus culture. Between this evangelism and any kind of Christian culture or training there is no possible antagonism. Let culture do its best. This culture is, I had almost said, essential to evangelism. It makes its own contribution to evangelism. It determines the quality of the material with which evangelism shall deal, while culture after evangelism determines what shall be the fruit of evangelism.

The supreme need is not Reformation. "Reformation is plucking bitter apples from a tree, and in their place tying good apples with a string. Reformation will not suffice. Reformation without evangelism is forever impossible. It is regeneration or degradation. Regeneration, the beginning of an upward movement by power not man's own; or degradation, the continuance and increase of a downward movement that can end only in ruin. Much is said about the descent of man. I believe in the descent of man, not from the brute, but to the brute. I do not believe that human nature comes from the brute creation, but I am bound to believe that apart from the

restraining influences of the Holy Spirit it tends constantly to the brute creation" (*Dr. A. H. Strong*).

The evangelism for which we plead is, of course, not versus reformation. Indeed, there can be no reformation without such evangelism, and the evangelism for which we plead will inevitably produce reformation. In a word, in this old gospel of atonement by blood there is embraced all that is in modern theories and incomparably more. These three theories, preservation, culture, reformation, constitute one family. All start upon the idea that the soul is by nature holy, and that the child is by nature a member of God's kingdom. Preservation undertakes to keep him so. Culture undertakes to undo the shortcomings of preservation and culture and to restore the soul when it is fallen. To you who have been to the Cross, who believe in the atonement and know the birth of the Holy Spirit, it is not necessary that we should stay to further refute these theories.

According to the testimony of Scripture and the voice of experience, the spiritual need of the child may be stated in one word—Christ. God, who knows human nature, its strength, its weakness, its need, "sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

We need Christ as Friend. This will be the earliest normal approach of the child to the Saviour. The child may very early learn to think of Jesus as a loving, protecting, providing friend. He may be trained to recognize that among the loving friends who surround him there is the invisible Friend in whom he can repose confidence and whom he can love and trust. Among all his friends, Jesus ought to be held up as the truest, the most faithful, the most loving. As love and friendship in these early years grow in response to love and friendship manifested by others, so the graces and gifts and goodness of the Lord may be held constantly before the child. The witness of children is the witness of all believers, "We love him because he first loved us."

As the years pass, the child's conception of Jesus as his chief and best friend may grow, and ought to grow. If the years bring sunshine and blessing, the child should be brought to see in these the smile and mercy of his Friend in heaven. If sorrow befalls, the season of darkness and distress will afford rare opportunity to sweeten and deepen the sense of the friendship of Jesus. In childhood perplexities, amid childish cares, the wise parent and teacher can strengthen the cords which bind the child heart to his best Friend. In all the after years this sense of confident reliance, of easy friendship, will constitute the heart and center of Christian living.

We need Christ as Teacher. It is of the child's nature and life to expect and accept teaching; the teacher satisfies his mental and spiritual hunger. His teachers stand close to his heart and entwine themselves deeply in his affections. These teachers fail in their highest privilege if they do not bring the child to look upon Jesus as his chief Teacher. Sitting, themselves, at the Master's feet and themselves looking to him as Teacher, they may bring the child from his earliest years to accept and regard Jesus as the preëminent Teacher.

Along his whole pathway he will need the light-giving, the problem-solving Teacher. Never will this need be more real or more keenly felt than through the years of childhood and youth. The child is a stranger in a strange world; he is pushing out along paths not hitherto trod and into fields he has not known before. He is often oppressed with a sense of his own ignorance, and more, perhaps, than we realize he craves and welcomes the light and guidance which the Teacher is so well able to impart. The soul which in the early years of life learns to sit at the feet of Jesus and look faithfully and lovingly to him as Teacher, is the soul which through life easily and naturally maintains the abiding attitude of learner at his feet.

We need Christ as Master or Lord. There inheres in every heart a sense of need and depend-

ence which prompts desire for the firm hand of mastery and lordship. The soul feels instinctively its need for some authority to control and direct. While this sense of need deepens with advancing years and enlarging experience, it is yet felt in these early years.

The teacher who himself cheerfully and fully accepts the lordship of Jesus and submits in all things to his authority will not find it difficult to bring the child to a similar attitude of obedience and submission. Those early years, when mind and heart so naturally demand and accept authority, furnish the golden season for the culture of a life habit and attitude of reverent submission to divine authority. Such attitude thus early brought about constitutes the sure basis for enduring character and worthy service.

Preëminently we need Christ as Saviour. There is no need to write hard things against the child, no need to stress the child's innate sinfulness to the obscuring of his virtues and winsomeness, in order to show that he needs a Saviour. Sin is incompleteness and imperfection, quite as much as it is vileness or viciousness. It inheres in the soul and is a state or attitude as well as an act or word. The child is incomplete and imperfect; he is essentially unholy; he "comes short of the glory of God." He needs a Saviour mighty to save.

RESTATEMENT.

I. Theories Concerning the Natural State.

1. The Culture Theory.
   (1) Denial of conversion and regeneration.
   (2) Regeneration at birth.
   (3) Regeneration through baptism.
   (4) Regeneration through culture.
2. The Conversion Theory.
   Children are "in a state of sin, need to be regenerated and can only be saved through personal faith in Christ."
   (1) Witness of Scripture.
   (2) Voice of Conscience.
   (3) Testimony of Experience.

II. The Supreme Need.

1. Is not—
   (1) Preservation.
   (2) Culture.
   (3) Reformation.
2. Is Christ.
   (1) As Friend.
   (2) As Teacher.
   (3) As Lord.
   (4) As Saviour.

To Guide and Test Study.

What is declared to be essential in any effort to win to Christ?

What two theories concerning the natural state are named?

State the culture theory. What three types are discussed?

State the conversion theory. Quote three passages of Scripture in support of this theory. What as to the witness of conscience and observation?

Show that preservation is not the child's supreme need. Is evangelism versus preservation?

Demonstrate by two Scripture examples that culture alone is not sufficient.

What is meant by the statement, "It is regeneration or degradation."

What is said to be the earliest normal approach to Christ? What duty grows out of this?

What of our need of Jesus as Teacher?

Do we need Jesus as Lord? Why?

Why do we need a Saviour? Quote two verses which declare that Jesus is Saviour.

IV.

THE NATURAL MORAL STATE.

A RIGHT conception and a real conviction regarding the moral state to which we come by nature is essential to right thinking concerning the atonement, and hence is vital in all soul-winning effort. We venture to raise some questions which will lead us to the heart of this whole matter.

"Is the child by nature religious?" We may save confusion here by using phrases with care, and by clearly defining the phrases we use. Let us distinguish between natural religion and revealed Christianity, between being in some natural sense religious and being in a divine sense a spiritual believer in the atoning Saviour.

Certainly the child has in some natural sense a religious nature. This is to say that he has instinct and capacity for God. In this capacity to know and worship God man stands distinct from all other creatures. But this is by no means to say that the child is by nature possessed of the spiritual religion which the New Testament provides for and demands.

The child may be by nature in some sense religious, but he is not naturally Christian. Be-

cause he is religious he may become Christian. The Creator planted so deep in the heart of man the instinct to worship it seems never to have been really annihilated. No people have yet been found who do not retain traces of this religious instinct originally planted in the race. Plutarch is quoted as saying, "If you will take the trouble to travel through the world, you will find towns and cities without walls, without letters, without kings, without houses, without wealth, without theatres, but there was never seen by any man any without temple or gods."

The child intuitively believes in a cause for every effect, and has thus the basis for belief in a great first cause. The conviction of continuing life, immortality, seems to be instinctive. The child seems to take it for granted that he and others will live on forever. Unless he is otherwise educated or influenced, he will grow to take it for granted that he is to live on after this life. There seems also to be at least in some dim sense, a native consciousness of guilt and a native impulse to seek atonement and propitiation. Made originally in the likeness and image of God, man has not, though fallen and marred by sin, wholly lost traces of his high origin.

It is possible to make quite too much of this natural religion. It is perilous to confuse this original religious nature with the spiritual life which can alone be imparted by the Holy Spirit.

We are not concerned so much about what the child is by nature as we are concerned about what he must be by grace in order to be saved from sin and to attain the high possibilities of his nature. Child nature, because it is not so hardened by experiences of sin, responds more readily to the appeal of the Christ nature.

If failing to distinguish between being in some natural original sense religious and being new creatures, spiritual believers, we accept this natural religion as final and sufficient and fail to bring the child to Christ the Saviour, we fatally miss our opportunity and do the child eternal wrong.

"Is the child by nature in the kingdom of God?" Here again confusion results from a loose use of terms. There is a natural kingdom of God and there is a spiritual kingdom of God. There is a sense in which God as king reigns over all men and all things. The Psalmist declares, "Thy kingdom ruleth over all." God is declared to be King of kings, and Lord of lords. Certainly man, along with all created beings, is embraced in this kingship and kingdom of God.

But higher and vastly different from this natural kingdom is the spiritual kingdom of God, the kingdom to which Jesus referred when he said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." According to this word of our Lord, this spiritual kingdom of God

consists of those who have been born again. In the nature of the case only such as by new birth have become partakers of the divine nature can have membership in this kingdom. It is writing no hard thing against the child to say that he does not belong to this kingdom. As we shall see a little later in these studies, the child is embraced in the provisions of this kingdom, and dying in infancy is saved from the consequences of sin.

Those who maintain that the child is by nature in God's spiritual kingdom do not essay to quote much Scripture in proof of their contention. Two passages are chiefly relied on for this purpose. Matthew 18: 3, "Verily, I say unto you, except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven." The context indicates that the disciples had engaged in a controversy as to who should be greatest. They bring that question to the Lord. He takes a little child and sets him in the midst, saying, "Except ye turn and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven" (R. V.). Pride, arrogance, ambition, are unthinkable in the kingdom of heaven and must be exchanged for the childlike character. This is the content of our Lord's teaching in this passage. The child and his spiritual state are not in mind. Rather, certain ungracious qualities are reproved and childlike characteristics are commended.

Another passage sometimes quoted in this connection is Mark 10: 14, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." Here, again, an ungracious spirit had been manifested on the part of the disciples in rebuking those who would bring little children to Jesus, and here also our Lord declares that members of his kingdom must be childlike. "Of such," or as in the Revised Version, "To such," people who have and who maintain the childlike spirit—"is the kingdom of God." Those who are in his kingdom are like children in some elements of character and attitude.

"Is the child *God's child?*"

Here, also, we do well to choose our phrases with care, lest we fall into error. In some natural sense the child may be regarded as God's child. God gave it life and God watches over and preserves its life. Jesus' loving attitude toward children may sufficiently indicate and attest God's love and gracious care for the child. If, during these early years, there shall be an increasingly clear sense of God's loving presence and care, this will prepare the way for an easy and early acceptance of Jesus as Saviour.

But the child is not by nature God's child in any spiritual New Testament sense. "Ye were by nature children of wrath even as others." The child which from his birth has been the object

of God's care and blessing, becomes God's child when by the birth from above he is made partaker of the divine nature. "And you did he make alive, when ye were dead through your trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2: 1). "Of his own will brought he us forth by the word of truth" (James 1: 18). "If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature"—margin—"there is a 'new creation' " (2 Cor. 5: 17).

The prodigal son in the well-known parable represents the sinner. This fact is sometimes held up to show that as the wayward son was a son still, so the sinner is still God's child. Certainly there was a relationship between the father and the absent boy, but how slight and poor that relationship! The son had renounced the relationship, had gone into a "far country," and was wasting his patrimony in "riotous living." When he returned, the father declared that he had been "dead," and further that he was "lost." The parable may be taken as indicating that between the sinner and God there is some natural relationship which sin has marred and suspended. Surely there is lying on the face of the story the teaching that the sinner is dead and must be brought to life, is lost and must be found, that he is in no high and spiritual sense God's son.

All efforts in evangelism must in the end base themselves on a conviction of the depth and reality of the changes wrought in the inner life

by the Spirit through conversion, the distance and the difference between what is by nature and what must be by grace. This change may be clearly seen in the following contrasts:

The Sinner.	The Believer.
"Dead."	"Alive Again."
"Dead in Tresspasses."	"Raised Up."
"Dead in Sins."	"Quickened."
"Lost."	"Found."
"Children of Wrath."	"Sons of God."
"Children of disobedience."	"Partakers of the Divine Nature."
"Children of the Flesh."	"Children of God."
"Carnal."	"Spiritual."
"Far Off."	"Made Nigh."
"Aliens and Strangers."	"Fellow Citizens with the Saints."
"Born of the Flesh."	"Born of the Spirit."
"Condemned Already."	"Now No Condemnation."
"Enmity Against God."	"My Friends."

"Is the Child saved?"

Let us say that child is *safe* through the provisions of grace, rather than that the child is *saved*. We are pleased to believe and do believe with practically all Christians that those who die in infancy are "safe in the arms of Jesus." The

righteous obedience of Jesus, the second Adam, we may well believe, stands over against any depravity or unholiness which have come through the sin of the first Adam. We cannot believe that by inherent merit or by holiness of his own the child enters the presence of God and is accepted of him without the cleansing of the blood of Jesus. Hence we prefer to say that in infancy the child is safe and that he will be saved when he comes to accountable years if he trusts Jesus as Saviour.

Dr. A. H. Strong sets this matter in such clear light we venture to quote the following:

(1) "Infants are in a state of sin, need to be regenerated and can only be saved through Christ.

(2) "Yet as compared with those who have personally transgressed, they are recognized as possessed of a relative innocence, and of a submissiveness and trustfulness, which may serve to illustrate the graces of Christian character.

(3) "For this reason they are objects of special divine compassion and care, and through the grace of Christ are certain of salvation.

(4) "The description of God's merciful provision as coëxtensive with the ruin of the Fall also lead us to believe that those who die in infancy receive salvation through Christ as certainly as they inherit sin from Adam.

(5) "The condition of salvation for adults is personal faith. Infants are incapable of fulfilling this condition. Since Christ has died for all, we have reason to believe that provision is made for their reception of Christ in some way.

(6) "Since there is no evidence that children dying in infancy are regenerated prior to death, either with or without the use of external means, it seems most probable that the work of regeneration may be performed by the Spirit in connection with the infant's first view of Christ in the other world. As the remains of natural depravity are eradicated not by death, but at death, through the sight of Christ and union with him, so the first moment of consciousness for the infant may be coincident with a view of Christ the Saviour which accomplishes the entire sanctification of its nature."

A devout father standing beside the lifeless body of his two-year-old child was heard to say, "The blood of Jesus means more to me today than it ever meant before. That blood has cleansed my child from the taint of inherited depravity. When my child and I shall stand together before the throne in yonder eternity, we will join in the shout, 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.' "

If the child which in its unsoiled innocency is called away from earth must be regenerated and cleansed in order to enter the presence of God where it is to live forever with the holy angels and the unfallen hosts of God, how much more does the child need regeneration if he is to live and grow amid the sinful and blighting conditions of earth surrounded by imperfect and sinful creatures! In all of this insistance that the child, however well-born, must be born again, that the child, however carefully preserved and trained, must be cleansed by the blood of Jesus, we do not write unduly hard things against the child, nor do we forget our Lord's attitude toward children. Jesus loved little children and delighted in them. They in turn instinctively loved and trusted Jesus. He put his hands upon them and blessed them. Associated with this word and act of blessing is the idea of pronouncing blessed. Our Lord in some sense pronounced encomium upon childhood. Moreover, Jesus used children as models to illustrate the character of the kingdom, "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." Our fathers made much of "total depravity." By this they meant not that the child is as bad as he can be, but that his every faculty is tainted by sin; that there is the germ of depravity in every child. The fact that the phrase was susceptible of misconception and required

always a word of explanation has caused it to be measurably discarded.

The child has naturally many winsome and beautiful qualities, is apparently innocent and lovable, is capable of almost infinite development. After all is said, however, we must conclude that the child, regardless of natural goodness and inherited traits, needs the atonement of Jesus. The Scriptures declare this in the strongest terms. Our observation of child life enforces this. Our own experience and our knowledge of our own nature compels us to accept it.

Two souls bow together at the altar and seek for mercy. One is a child of ten, reared in the home of a minister, breathing from his birth the atmosphere of hope and faith and trust; accustomed from the time he began to talk to kneel beside his mother and pray his evening prayer. He has now come under conviction for sin and is looking away to the Cross for mercy and pardon. At his side is a man of forty, a sinner hardened in guilt and fixed in unbelief. He, too, is by the Holy Spirit brought under conviction for sin and is laying hold on life eternal.

See them as they kneel side by side, the comparatively innocent child and the poor, hardened sinner. After all, the difference between them is a difference in degree rather than in kind. The same disease has fastened on this boy that has blighted the man, the dread disease, *sin*. The boy

must be saved through repentance and faith and by the divine Spirit, just the same as the man. As they stand together now rejoicing in a Saviour's pardoning love, they can sing together:

"Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see."

The child realizes that he was a wretch in possibility and feels himself doubly indebted to the goodness of God in that he is saved and may be kept from the depths which apart from grace are inevitable to him. When the two shall stand together yonder at the throne and the multitudes shall cry, "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory," the child-convert can join as heartily as the man who was snatched as a brand from the burning.

Let this child-convert thus saved and thus consciously dependent on the blood of Jesus and his atonement stand side by side with the imaginary child of whom we are often told that he was born as God's child, and therefore requires no blood of Jesus and no new birth. What as to the probable types of life and character which these two will develop? The one is indebted to Jesus and his suffering atonement for all that he is or ever can hope to be. With the passing years, the vision

and sense of this indebtedness grows and deepens. This sense of grateful obligation tinges the whole life and affects the whole character.

It is not so with the other. He is taught that he was born in the kingdom; he owes no such debt of gratitude. He has no such reason or motive for putting his life on the altar for Christ. Is it difficult to surmise the results in character? Will such an one be willing to stand in the breach and make his life an offering to God? As it is easy to estimate the difference between two such individuals, so must it be easy to conceive the difference in the community life which must result from acceptance of the one or the other of these theories.

RESTATEMENT.

The Natural Moral State.

I. Is the Child Religious?
   1. Has capacity for religion.
   2. No, he is not Christian.

II. Is the Child in the Kingdom of God?
   1. In the natural kingdom (Psalm 103: 19).
   2. No, not in the Spiritual kingdom (John 3: 3).

III. Is the Child God's Child?
   1. In some natural sense.
   2. No, not in spiritual and New Testament sense.

IV. Is the Child Saved?

1. Yes, safe in infancy through Christ.
2. No, not "saved" except by personal faith.

To Guide and Test Study.

Why is our belief concerning the natural moral state vital in soul-winning effort?

In what sense may the child be said to be religious? What distinction requires to be made here? What of failure to make this distinction?

Of whom does God's spiritual kingdom consist?

Quote two passages sometimes relied on to prove that children naturally belong to the spiritual kingdom, and indicate what these passages really mean.

How does the child become God's child? Quote two Scriptures in this connection.

Are infants dying in infancy saved? How? When is the work of regeneration probably performed?

What deduction is made from the necessity of regeneration on the part of the child who dies in infancy?

What is your own opinion as regards the position stated relative to the needs of the "child of ten" and the "man of forty"?

V.

SOME REQUISITES IN WINNING TO CHRIST.

THE foundations for conversion should be laid in the early years in the home. It is good to believe that many Christian homes are busy laying these foundations. In all cases, however, the fires on the family altar should be kindled and kept burning by the fires of evangelistic zeal which burn on the altar in the Sunday school and the church. We now consider some requisites in the matter of winning to our Lord.

A first requisite is to create an atmosphere for such winning. In all matters of life and growth we are coming more and more to value the fine power of atmosphere. Certainly in the realm of evangelism and in all matters of spiritual life and growth it is difficult to estimate the power and meaning of atmosphere.

There are communities in which it is fairly impossible to offer Christ in simple and confident fashion. The most zealous evangelistic spirit is quenched and repelled by the iciness which prevails. In other communities it is difficult to withhold the evangelistic note. A worker recently took part in a great Sunday school occasion.

Finding the atmosphere strangely and clearly favorable to evangelism, he set aside his prepared message and brought a simple appeal and invitation to accept Christ. Seventeen responded, and all were shortly afterwards baptized into the fellowship of the church. It was that fine intangible something which we call atmosphere and which every spiritual soul instinctively feels.

It is not easy to create and maintain such atmosphere. Not the pastor alone, nor yet the pastor, the superintendent and teachers, can create such spiritual conditions. All the estates of Israel must join hands and hearts and prayers for the high task.

Another requisite is that we shall train for it.

We must train the child for it. Whether the child will yield to Christ and publicly confess him depends much on what the child knows and what he is as the result of the training of the years. We will train the child *for* Christ. Because the child is some day to be Christ's witness and messenger we will patiently build into his life all possible elements of strength and beauty.

We will train the child *toward* Christ. There is such a thing as preparing for conversion. The mother dealing with the little child will carefully train toward Christ; the beginner and primary teacher will catch up the process and carry it forward.

We will train *in* Christ. When we have brought the child to Christ, our task is only fairly begun. Then we are to nurture and cultivate the child in all the deep and precious things of Jesus. There are certain habits which early fixed on the child make his conversion exceedingly improbable. These will be discussed in a later chapter. The worker who will win the child to Jesus will guard against these pernicious habits. He will seek to plant the holy habits of prayer, Bible-reading, church attendance. We will train the child with a view to his early conversion.

We must train the teachers to this end.

Whatever we want in the Sunday school we train for it. If we desire better teaching, we train for it. If evangelism is desirable and in a sense preëminent, why may we not train for it?

A church community got this vision of training for soul-winning. The officers and teachers were drawn together in a special class to study and train for evangelism. These workers assembled for a blessed hour each week in an upper room to pray and search the Scriptures. They used as a text-book Dr. Torrey's "How to Bring Men to Christ." They studied together the various problems of practical evangelism, how to open the subject of personal religion, how to deal with various difficulties, how to lead various types

of character, and especially how to use the Word in dealing with the lost.

When these seasons of prayerful preparation had continued for some weeks, a teacher came to the pastor just before the evening service, her face all lighted with joy, and said, "Pastor, a year ago my little girl came home from church crushed beneath a burden of sin. I was as helpless as if I had been myself a child. I called you in and you took my crown. I remember well how easily and graciously you led my child to accept and trust the Saviour. This morning my little boy came home under conviction for sin. I detected instantly the Spirit's presence; I had been studying in the soul-winner's class; I knew what to say and do. I took my child into the parlor alone, turned to Isaiah 53: 1–6, and told the sweet, simple story of Jesus and his atoning death. Then we prayed together, my child and I, and it was my joy to see him give his heart to the Saviour." Within three months after the inauguration of that training class, some forty had, through the efforts of the teachers, yielded to the Saviour. We will train the teachers for personal work in dealing with the lost.

We must teach for this end.

Our teaching, if our hearts are full of this spirit of evangelism, will be flavored by it. There will be the evangelistic note running through all of our instruction. But there is a certain vital

content of truth which is especially needful and which the teacher must see that the child shall come to know. This concerns the sinfulness of sin and the holiness of God, the atonement of Jesus wrought out in his sacrificial life and death, the duty of every soul to repent and believe the gospel. The teacher who knows these things by a deep and sweet experience, who has a blessed conviction concerning them and who teaches them to the young, will not find it difficult to win the pupils early to love and trust the Saviour.

We must secure information with a view to winning to Christ.

To secure full and accurate information is a first step toward intelligent effort. Indeed, a failure to seek such information convicts us of indifference and sloth. The jeweler who possesses rare and costly stones has each stone carefully listed, and is able to tell at a moment's notice the history and worth of each of his gems. Can the pastor or teacher afford to be less accurately informed as regards the priceless lives the Father has entrusted to his care? The process necessary to secure such information will awaken interest while the information itself will be a challenge to effort.

A pastor led his forces along the lines outlined below, with the result that more than fifty pupils were converted in the regular services in three months. In the workers' council the pastor laid

it on the hearts of the officers and teachers that the supreme thing in Sunday school work is to win to Christ. For a season every energy was to be bent toward this one thing.

As preparatory and preliminary to the work in hand, full and accurate information was to be secured in all departments from the Juniors up. For the purpose of securing accurate information and at the same time giving notice in all circles of what was proposed the teachers were urged to visit the pupils and interview them personally. As helpful for guidance and training, information was to be secured in all cases, whether the pupils were church members or not. Cards such as are here presented were prepared for this purpose:

INFORMATION CARD.

To Be Filled Out by the Teacher After a Visit to the Home.

FORM FOR CHURCH MEMBERS.

Name .....
Address .....
Grade and Department? .....
Date of Baptism? .....
Regular church attendant? .....
Satisfactory evidence of growth in grace? .....
Indications of call to ministry, missionary or special work? .....
Doing any specific religious work? .....
State nature of such work.....

Religious condition of parents:
(1) Father. Is he a church member? .....
Where? .....
(2) Mother. Is she a church member? .....
Where? .....
Add remarks, if desired, on other side of this card.
....., Teacher.
Date.....

INFORMATION CARD.

To Be Filled Out by the Teacher After a Visit to the Home.

FORM FOR THOSE NOT CHURCH MEMBERS.

Name .....
Address .....
Grade and Department? .....
Regular church attendant? .....
Ever made profession? .....
Any evidence of interest? .....
Religious condition of parents:
(1) Father. Is he a church member? .....
Where? .....
(2) Mother. Is she a church member? .....
Where? .....
Add remarks, if desired, on other side of this card.
....., Teacher.
Date.....

When these cards had been filled out with the desired information, they were assorted by departments and set before the workers' council. Announcement, in the Junior Department, for example, was made somewhat as follows: "Here

in these two sets of cards is complete information regarding our Junior Department. Here are twenty-six cards for Juniors who are already in the church. Here are forty-four cards which give information concerning Juniors who are not saved."

Statement was made in like manner in connection with each department. Information about as follows was deduced: Forty-four Juniors, thirty-six Intermediates and nineteen Senior-adults were without Christ, a total of ninety-nine. Here, then, were the "possibilities" of that school in the matter of soul-winning. All vagueness was dispelled, all uncertainty was gone. Copies of the cards were made and each teacher was given a full record of the lost in his class. All went in to work together, by personal approach, by appeals from the platform, in the Sunday school and church services, by every possible means, for the salvation of the ninety-nine whose names were listed. From week to week, in special sessions of the workers' council, the cards were checked up and those who were being saved were taken from the list of the unconverted and added to the list of the saved. At the end of three months it was found that fifty-five had been baptized.

In order to secure a definite committal to seek the Lord, the unconverted were asked to sign the following card:

SEEKING JESUS.

Knowing myself to be a sinner in need of a Saviour, I desire to seek the Lord and become a Christian. I ask the prayers of the church that I may be saved.

Name .....
Grade (or age) .....
Address .....

For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3: 16.)

In order to keep accurate information and also to send the announcement to the home, pupils who accepted Christ were asked to sign in duplicate the following card, one copy being kept by the pastor, the other being taken to the parents:

CONFESSION CARD.

As a sinner lost and helpless, I take Jesus to be my Saviour from sin. I love him, and trust him as my Saviour and Lord. It is my desire to be baptized in his name and it is my purpose to obey and serve him.

Name .....
Grade (or age) .....
Address .....

As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believed on his name. (John 1: 12.)

A well-known evangelist returned to his home after a season of absence. The day before his return a girl in her early teens had died and the

family desired this evangelist to conduct the services. He walked down to the home and, in conversation with the father, said, "I ought to know, but I am away from home so much; was Mary a professed Christian?" The father said sadly, "I do not take as much interest in those things as I ought; her mother will know; we will ask her." When the mother came in, she confessed that she did not know, but the *pastor* was faithful and careful in these matters; *he* would know. The pastor was consulted. He did not recall, but the *superintendent* knew the young people well, and was always concerned for their spiritual welfare; he would know. But the superintendent did not know. He felt sure, however, that Mary's *teacher* would know. Alas, the teacher sorrowfully confessed, "I had long intended to speak to Mary about the Saviour. Somehow I neglected to do so, and now she is gone from us." Thus the young life had slipped through the hands of pastor and superintendent, of teacher and parents, and the soul had gone away to meet God without a single earnest effort to bring her to accept Jesus.

The superintendent and pastor surely ought to know about every pupil, his spiritual condition, whether he has manifested an interest, whether he has made a confession of Jesus, whether his parents are saved and whether his home influence is spiritually wholesome. Cards

suitable for securing this information may be had from the Sunday School Board, or they may be printed at small expense.

There must be a *strong conviction of the sinfulness of sin and of the sufficiency of the atoning work of Jesus.* One must know the plan of salvation, not only intellectually and not alone by an experience of grace, but by a present vivid knowing. The joy of this present knowledge must be real and keen. The Psalmist prays, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee."

There must be a working knowledge of the Bible. This does not mean that the one who would win souls must needs be a finished Bible scholar. It does mean that he must know how to use the Bible to show the fact and reality of sin, the sufficiency of the saving work of our Lord, and the duty of immediate acceptance of the offer of salvation. This content of Bible knowledge is set forth in a later discussion.

We must live for this end. Surely this is a high purpose for which any teacher will do well to live. A teacher was urged to attend a place of amusement concerning which there was some question. She declined, saying, "I am living for the salvation of my pupils. I should almost rather see them in their graves than to see them

caught and swept by tides of gayety and godlessness." A few weeks later a revival was on, and that teacher had the joy of seeing twelve beautiful girls give themselves to the Saviour. She had lived to this end.

We must have a deep yearning for lost souls. Jesus in all of his glorious ministry felt such compassion for the lost. His miracles of healing are marked by the throbbing desire to reach and save men's souls. Read again, and on your knees, his matchless parables in Luke 15, the lost coin, the lost sheep, the lost son. In the threefold picture rising constantly higher in dignity and pathos see inside the heart of the Son of man and catch his outlook on human life. That fine, ceaseless zeal for the souls of men, that passionate grief for their sins, lends a nameless charm to his life and ministry. This constitutes its deathless power.

This yearning compassion is essential in all soul-winning work. There is no substitute for it; not culture, nor Bible knowledge, nor zeal, can take its place. This heart-compassion is part of the price which the Christ pays that he may redeem us. It is the price we must pay if we will share in his glorious redeeming work. What a word is that word of Paul, "I fill up that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ;" the sufferings of Jesus go out for the lost, but they do not quite reach the lost until we "fill up that which

is lacking" by standing with our crushed hearts between the suffering Saviour and the lost soul. It will be a sad exchange if through busy pressure and the effort to do many and great things we yield up this spirit of yearning, this heart-break for the lost. If now as we look into our hearts and back over our lives these fires are burning low, if we have exchanged the yearning note for the didactic note or for the note of authority, or for any other note, we will do well to go aside for a season, rekindle the fires and catch again the note of Jesus and Paul and of every successful winner of men since their day.

RESTATEMENT.

I. General Requisites.

1. Create a favorable atmosphere.
2. Train the child.
3. Train teachers.
4. Teach for this end.
5. Secure information.

II. Personal Requisites.

1. Clear conviction of the plan of salvation.
2. Working knowledge of the Bible.
3. Must *live* for this end.
4. Have yearning for the lost.

To Guide and Test Study.

Describe an atmosphere favorable to soul-winning.

In what three ways are we to train the child as regards evangelism?

Mention briefly the content of teaching which is especially needed in the effort to win to Christ.

Suggest a plan for securing information concerning the lost. What as to the value of such information?

What conviction is suggested as a special requisite to winning the lost?

What kind of knowledge of the Bible is essential in soul-winning?

What is your own estimate of the value of a consistent life in the matter of winning the lost?

What can you say as to the necessity of compassion for the lost?

VI.

HABITS WHICH AID IN WINNING TO CHRIST.

EARLY conversion and rounded development in the Christian life depend much on the habits formed in childhood. Whoever helps to guard young life against vicious habits and guides in forming certain right habits makes vital contribution to evangelism. The question as to whether a given soul will early accept Christ and be saved is usually determined long before that life reaches the years of accountability.

We mention briefly certain evil habits which may constitute effective barriers to coming to Christ.

Reading light and evil literature may, besides other serious harm, be a barrier to prevent an early coming to Christ. Literature which unduly fascinates by portrayals of adventure, or by stories of morbid sentimentality, or by incidents of crime, dwarfs those finer qualities of heart and life upon which the appeal of Christ lays hold. Such reading has kept uncounted thouands of boys and girls from early conversion. As such literature is quite likely to be sought and read secretly and thus read proves most harm-

ful, those who deal with young life will do well to take pains to know what habits of this kind are forming.

All habits of *profane swearing* stand strongly in the way of efforts to win to Christ. Such habits have the inevitable effect of destroying reverence for God's nature, of weakening moral fiber, and of deadening the finer instincts of the heart. Here, as in the matter of reading hurtful literature, the habit is likely to be formed and indulged without the knowledge of parents and teachers. From many reliable witnesses who have varied touch with youthful life, there comes up the testimony that this evil of profane swearing is all too prevalent among the boys of our land, and that the evil is not confined to those who live in lowly or vicious homes. This evil habit may effectually counteract all effort to win to Christ.

Habits of *impurity* may likewise stand in the way of efforts to win to Christ. It is well known that evils of this kind have to a remarkable degree the effect of dulling the spiritual nature and thus of preventing ready response to the call of the Christ. Pure human love is the basis of pure and strong love for God. The nature which has rendered itself incapable of holy and sweet human affection is thereby rendered incapable of the highest and purest love to God.

The *cigarette habit* must also be mentioned as antagonistic to early conversion. The use of

cigarettes, far more than is generally appreciated, dwarfs spiritual development and paralyzes the better impulses of the soul. It has been often asserted that the victim of this habit is seldom the subject of a genuine experience of grace. Certain it is that the probabilities of conversion are decreased by its baneful effects.

Indulgence in *questionable amusements* frequently constitutes an effective barrier in the way of the conversion of our young people. The whole question of amusements is discussed in a later chapter. The matter is mentioned here for the sake of completeness and by reason of its vital bearing on the developments and choices of young life. Every soul-winner knows well that a chief difficulty to overcome in the effort to lead young people to Christ lies in the lines of questionable amusements.

We will now consider some habits which may directly contribute to an early decision for Christ and to fruitfulness in the Christian life.

The habit of *reading wholesome religious literature* deserves to be named as vitally contributing to an early and full surrender to Christ. Reference has already been made to the reading of evil literature as standing seriously in the way of conversion. In many ways right habits of reading and the reading of wholesome literature may lead toward Christ. In a negative way it preëmpts the heart and occupies the time, and

thus saves from possible evil influences. In a positive way it brings high ideals and visions of achievement and habits of right thinking. The history of great religious movements, the biography of missionary leaders, the story of early Christian martyrs, these and the many similar types of reading so abundantly offered for our youth along with more distinctively evangelistic literature, must be helpful in preparing the way for early conversion.

Daily Bible reading deserves also to be mentioned in this connection. The individual who has firmly fixed the custom of spending a few minutes with the open Bible each day will, when conviction comes, be likely to extend the usual time and linger with the open Book. He may be easily led to search the Scriptures with a view to find for himself the way of life.

The habit of *daily prayer* besides the general blessing it brings in heart and life will make its own contribution to an early turning to the Lord. If daily there has been a quiet season alone with God, and this practice is firmly fixed, it will hardly be difficult to bring about a serious consideration of the spiritual claims of God's kingdom.

Young children should be taught some simple forms of prayer which may be expanded with the years, and which should gradually give way to the habit of offering original prayers.

For very small children, the little prayer, familiar to all Christian homes, is suitable:

"Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep;
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take."

Petition for others will be added to the prayer by the thoughtful parent. When they are somewhat older, they may be taught the model prayer, commonly known as the "Lord's Prayer." As this prayer is given in our English Bible with some variations, it would be well if the Christian world might agree on some one form for usual concerted use. It is suggested that our youth should be taught the following form as being now most generally used:

"Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name;
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
And forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive those who trespass against us;
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil,
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and
the glory,
Forever and ever. Amen!"

The little child in the early years of church attendance should be carefully instructed concerning the worship, and guided in the matter of prayer. When he comes into the sanctuary there might be a pause, a hush, with the head bowed for a moment of silent prayer. It would not be amiss for the child to memorize a bit of Scripture to repeat at this time:

"One thing have I desired of the Lord,
That will I seek after;
That I may dwell in the house of the Lord
All the days of my life;
To behold the beauty of the Lord,
And to inquire in his temple."

—*Psalm* 27: 4.

"The Lord is in his holy temple,
Let all the earth keep silence before him."

Habakkuk 2: 20.

No discussion of habits which contribute to evangelism would be complete without mention of *church attendance.*

From the city and the country, from every part of this land and even from other lands, there comes up the report that our young people are forsaking attendance upon our regular services for worship. A popular and powerful pastor said recently, "If a man will take his stand at the corner on which is the church in which I

minister, he can see any Sunday morning at a quarter to eleven two congregations, one coming and the other going." The absence of children in the worshiping congregation is becoming an increasing source of concern among Christian workers.

The fine charm with which the Sunday school is invested, the persistence with which the pupil is sought and held, the careful adaptation of music and lessons and worship to the various stages of life, help to account for the enlarging attendance of young life upon the teaching service. The absence of these, together with the increasing tendency to order the regular worshiping services of the church without reference to the needs of children and to meet the tastes and the needs of adults, must be held responsible for any decline of interest on the part of children and young people in these services.

Among the many solutions proposed for this serious problem we mention two, "the Junior congregation," and the plan of combining the teaching and preaching into one morning service.

"The Junior Congregation." This plan originated in Philadelphia some twenty-five years ago, and has found favor in various sections. The young people up to sixteen years of age are called together after careful announcements and special effort to secure the largest possible attendance. Those who are willing have their names enrolled

as members of "the Junior congregation," agreeing to attend at least one service each Sunday. The pastor is selected to be the minister of the congregation. A simple adjustment is made by which a record is kept each Sunday of the church attendance of the young people, and at the close of each quarter those making a perfect record are given public recognition. In the Edgefield Baptist Church, Nashville, Tenn., where this plan is in successful operation, sixty young people made a perfect record of attendance through the summer season. It needs hardly to be said that their presence in the preaching services of the church brought inspiration to the pastor and blessing to the congregation.

The plan of combining teaching and preaching into one morning service. Instead of two distinct services on Sunday morning, only one is held. The one service opens usually at 10.30 A.M. After a brief season of praise and prayer, thirty or forty minutes is allowed for teaching. When the audience reassembles reports are read and the pastor, after another season of praise and prayer, brings the morning message, the whole morning service occupying about an hour and a half. This plan has been in operation for some years at the Southern Baptist Assembly, Ridgecrest, N. C., and is becoming somewhat widely used. Its advocates claim that it has the effect of securing the attendance of adults on the teach-

ing service and the attendance of children and young people on the preaching service.

However the problem may be solved and in whatever ways church attendance may be secured, our present purpose is to point out the bearing of this church-going habit upon the matter of conversion. The church which will reap a ceaseless harvest of young life for the kingdom of God must somehow establish on the part of its children and youth the habit of church attendance.

RESTATEMENT.

HABITS WHICH AID IN WINNING TO CHRIST:

I. Habits which hinder.
   1. Reading evil literature.
   2. Profane swearing.
   3. Impurity.
   4. The cigarette habit.
   5. Questionable amusements.

II. Habits which help.
   1. Reading wholesome literature.
   2. Daily Bible reading.
   3. Daily prayer.
   4. Church attendance.
      (1) Why it has declined.
      (2) Methods for restoring.
         a. The Junior Congregation.
         b. The combination service.

To Guide and Test Study.

What of habits as affecting evangelism?

To what extent are the youth of your community affected by light and evil literature?

What is your own opinion as to the prevalence of profane swearing among the boys and men of your community?

How do habits of impurity affect evangelism?

What of the effects of the cigarette habit? How far is this habit prevalent in your community?

To what extent have questionable amusements affected soul-winning efforts in your own community?

In what ways may the habit of reading wholesome literature contribute to evangelism?

How may the habit of daily Bible reading aid in soul-winning efforts?

What as to *daily prayer* as an element in our evangelizing efforts?

How far is it true of your community that children and young people are forsaking the preaching services of the church? Why?

Tell of two methods presented for securing attendance of children and young people on the preaching services.

VII.

WINNING TO CHRIST THROUGH THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

FOR many reasons the Sunday school offers a natural and superior opportunity for winning to Christ. The easy, somewhat informal life, the close relation of teacher to pupil, the presence of a great abundance of young life; these and other considerations make the Sunday school an excellent agency for evangelism.

It will be found well to deal with the lost *in the several departments.* Grading in the Sunday school has brought practical blessings in many lines. The contribution which grading makes to evangelism has hardly received the emphasis which its importance merits. In the old-time order we were wont to assemble the school for evangelistic services with the little ones at the front and all the grades assembled together. The word suitable for the very little people was not the word suitable for the older boys and girls. The proposition intended for the more mature children was ofttimes accepted by the immature little ones, to the discomfort of the workers and to the undoing of the seriousness of the occasion. Who has not witnessed just such things? In the graded school, the pupils are separated into de-

partments and they can thus have separate and suitable instruction and guidance. It is possible to go to the Primary Department with just the word and the dealing needed by children of eight years and under, and thus on through the various departments.

The junior period (9 to 12) probably will be found to be the great harvest season so far as public confession and baptism are concerned. A certain pastor was accustomed to go at frequent intervals into the Junior Department. He would present the claims of Jesus and ask the saved boys and girls to come and stand together about him. Then he would propose that those who desired to seek the Lord should come also and stand with them while a prayer was offered. After the prayer and while all sang softly, the pastor would invite and urge acceptance and public confession of the Saviour. Thus he kept the matter of personal faith pressed upon the growing youth and there can be little wonder that few pupils in that school ever passed out of the Junior Department unsaved.

The Intermediate Department (13 to 16) will also be found to offer a fruitful evangelistic field, especially if the work has not been closely pressed among the Juniors. Evidently there is vast advantage in being able to deal separately and appropriately with each division of life. The Senior and Adult Departments must not be neg-

lected; tactful effort persistently made will bear abundant fruits among adults who, though they are not Christians, are yet willing to attend Sunday school for the study of God's Word.

Many teachers will wish to deal with their pupils *in the class*. There are teachers who have little teaching ability, but who possess rare tact in speaking to the class collectively and to individual members about matters of personal faith, and who thus are able to do a far-reaching work. Many opportunities arise in the class. In the prayer offered with the class, mention may be made of "the lost in our number," in a way to make a deep impression. In making special applications or appeals, the teacher's eye may rest for a moment on the unsaved pupil in a way to search and impress. Simple evangelistic services may be held with the class, especially if there are separate class rooms.

The teacher bent on the saving of his pupils may wish to have the pupils *in his home* for this purpose. Few teachers perhaps realize with what deference, even reverence, they are regarded by their pupils. Especially is this true among the younger children. To be invited to "teacher's home" is an event of no small consequence. And "teacher's home" is an excellent place and affords an excellent opportunity to win the pupil to Christ.

A discouraged teacher wished to give up her class, saying, "I seem unable to win my girls to the Saviour." The pastor said, "Let us try one time more. Invite two of the girls to your home tomorrow, and I will drop in and talk the matter over with them." The next afternoon the pastor came into the teacher's home and found two bright girls seated there. He opened the great subject of salvation immediately and presented the claims of Jesus. There in "teacher's home" the two girls gave their hearts to the Saviour. Within a week every lost girl in the class had been invited to the home of the teacher and had there confessed Jesus.

Perhaps it may be well to *visit the home of the pupil.* A visit to the home for this express purpose may have good results. Go over to the home and say to the one who meets you, "I came to see John on a matter of some importance." "Oh, he is not at home! then tell him I will call again in a day or two; I must see him." When another call is made, "I am glad to see you, John. No; your mother must not leave us, I want her with us. I came over to talk to you about giving your heart to Jesus. I have long prayed and labored to that end, and I hope the time has come when you will yourself seek the Saviour." When the conversation is thus definitely open, it will be easy to press for a decision.

A pastor had been in an evangelistic service on a Sunday afternoon, and his heart was stirred with desire to lead some soul to Christ. He prayed for guidance and found his heart led out toward a fourteen-year-old boy who had recently moved into the community. Walking over to the home, he found the boy in the yard. "John, I came over to see you; come with me into the house." Entering the home, "Mrs. L—, I came over to talk to John about the Saviour. Will you come and sit with us?" The old, sweet story was told, of how Jesus came to live and die in our stead. They prayed together in the parlor, and the boy was happily saved. The mother, amid tears of gratitude, told the pastor how only two months before the boy's father had, on his death-bed, charged the child to seek the Lord; "God sent you to our home today; both John and myself were hungry for just the message you brought." And they are hungry for our message, more of them than we know. A choice place to deliver the message, a favorable atmosphere, may be found in the home of the pupil whom we seek to win.

In seeking to win to Christ we will perhaps do well *to write letters.* Children and young people have not grown accustomed, as we older people have, to receiving communications by mail. A letter, a card, from "teacher," may mark an event in the life of a child. It may be well thus

to approach the question of the soul's welfare. This will open the way later for an easy conversion on the greatest of all questions.

Henry Clay Trumbull tells how a letter won him to Christ and turned the tide of his life. "Before I had read the last of this letter, I was on my knees in that corner room in that lofty tower summit, asking forgiveness of God and committing myself to a long-slighted Saviour. That was a turning point in my course; and in a half century that has passed since then I have been renewedly more and more grateful for the writing of that letter, and for the loving spirit that prompted it."

Certainly the teacher will not wish to write the same letter to different children, nor will he care to write in formal or stereotyped style. Let him say in simple, straightforward fashion the things which are in his heart. In writing to the child or in speaking to him, there is no need to be yourself childish. Be your own self, talk quietly and earnestly as would be natural in discussing a matter so grave.

In winning to Christ we will need to *use the young people themselves* as evangelists to their lost companions. We ought to do this because thus the youthful worker grows in faith and in vision and conviction of Christ. We ought to do this also because they may have fine influence in this work among their companions.

A young preacher was resting during the afternoon of a busy day during a season of revival. There was a timid knock—a little boy thrust his head in at the door and said, "Please, we boys are in trouble; could you come down into the garden and help us out?" The preacher was a bit perplexed; what could the trouble be; had one of the boys fallen out of a tree and broken his arm? Certainly, the preacher would help the boys if he could. Walking down into the garden with his youthful guide, he saw a strange sight. Seven boys were sitting around a little fellow, trying to lead him to Christ. The leader said, "We have done our best; we have each one of us told him how we found Jesus, but we do not seem able to make it plain." The preacher sat down in the group and told how he himself, a lad of ten years, gave his heart to Jesus, and pointed out the way of life. Then they bowed their heads and prayed, and while they prayed the light dawned on the child's sorrowing soul, and a blessed sense of forgiveness possessed him. That night when this boy came to confess the Saviour, the pastor called the other boys up and told the story of what had happened in the garden that afternoon. "These boys are my helpers; I am counting on them every one." And those boys became helpers indeed; they banded themselves together and worked for their lost friends so faithfully that a score of boys were brought to Jesus.

In this work we need to *persist with the rare patience of Jesus himself.* We will find individuals who will resist our efforts and baffle us utterly. Whoever undertakes this work with the thought that children and young people will always yield readily to appeals and efforts, will find himself sadly disappointed. Young people will sometimes resist the Spirit with a strange perverseness. We will need to be patient and persistent.

A revival was drawing to a close. The last night a few boys had responded to the appeal to seek the Lord. One of these boys interested the preacher especially, a boy of pure face and noble form. The claims of the gospel were urged, and this lad trembled under the power of a great conviction. At last he said, "I will not decide this matter now. I mean to be a Christian, but not now." The meeting closed that night. The next Saturday afternoon the boy was accidentally shot. As death approached, the Christian physician, at the request of the family, urged him to accept and confess the Saviour. "No," he said, "when the preacher pleaded so faithfully last Monday night I decided that I would not yield. The Spirit seemed to leave me then, and my heart is now cold and dead as a stone." Thus he went out without Christ and without hope. That preacher has often wished, and wishes today, that

he had yet further persisted if perchance he might have availed when the boy was so near the kingdom.

RESTATEMENT.

Win to Christ,

I. In departments.
II. In the class.
III. In the teacher's home.
IV. In the pupil's home.
V. By writing letters.
VI. By using converted youth.
VII. Persist with the patience of Jesus.

To Guide and Test Study.

Why does the Sunday school constitute a favorable agency for evangelism?

Why deal with the lost in the several departments? Outline the plan suggested for winning the lost in the Junior Department.

Suggest some ways of winning the lost in the class.

What is your own impression of the value of soul-winning efforts made in the home of the teacher?

What of such efforts in the pupil's home?

Write a brief letter which might be suitable to send to a boy of twelve concerning the matter of seeking the Lord.

Why should young people be used as evangelists to seek their lost friends?

VIII.

DEALING WITH THE INDIVIDUAL.

IN all efforts to win the lost, it is personality and the personal touch that counts for most. A wise, tactful appeal, backed by holy living, must have its effect.

Win respect and affection. It is, of course, essential first of all that we who would win the child to Christ shall command his unqualified respect. Young people are exacting in their demands. Their standards are somewhat inflexible and their demands are rigid. Later they will learn to make allowance and will know more of the temptations and battles of life. At present they have their ideals, and woe to their elders if they fall short or in any wise disappoint their expectations. It is possible in one single hour of laxity or swerving to shatter the confidence of the adolescent boy or girl.

It is scarce less important to win love. It is one thing to command respect, it is a higher thing to draw out love. A teacher stood alone with her pupil in the quiet of the evening. "Louise, do you love me?" For response the child pressed the teacher's hand and gave her an impulsive kiss. "But, Louise, if you love me, I want you to love my Saviour." How many chil-

dren and older people have come to love Jesus because they had learned to love someone whose life is devoted to him.

Seize the opportune time. This is always a matter of prime consequence in winning the lost. There are critical moments when the Spirit seems to set ajar all doors of approach to the citadel of the soul, moments when the gentlest whisper will penetrate to the deep recesses of the heart. Such times may come at the most unexpected seasons. We will watch for them as the watchman watches for the morning. It may be that under the teaching of a lesson or under a sermon the Spirit will begin his mighty work and will call for our coöperation to carry that work to a glorious completion in salvation. It may be that some sorrow or disappointment will bring the opportune time. Such time will most likely come all unexpectedly and there may be nothing more than a sigh, a question, a yearning in the voice to serve notice that the way is open for the word touching the Saviour.

"I remember very well," wrote a young man, "the morning I packed up my things to go and fill a situation in the city, how my mother prayed for me and said, as she thought of the temptations I should be subject to, 'Oh, William, how I wish you were a Christian!' I wished so, too. She hoped all would be right. When that day I went into the garden to say good-bye to father,

as he saw me coming he turned his head to hide the tears, and he reached out his calloused hand, calloused for me, and said, 'You are going away from home, William, and all you have in this world is your good name. Keep that. Attend church regularly every Sabbath somewhere, and all will come out right.' I promised him I would. I went away sad, but determined to keep my promise." That father and mother, after years of waiting, spoke at an opportune time, and their son was speedily converted.

We may bring about such occasion and create such opportune conditions. A bright boy presented himself for church membership one Sunday morning. "Harry," said the pastor, "there has been no revival, and there seems to be no special interest; tell us how it is that you come confessing the Saviour and wanting to be baptized." The boy replied, "It was like this: last Sunday morning after class my teacher said, 'Wouldn't you like to walk with me in the park this afternoon? I have something very important I want to talk to you about.' Now, we boys are always glad to be with teacher, so I said, 'Sure, you may count on me.' At four o'clock teacher and I were walking together in the park. We sat down on a rustic seat, and teacher said, 'Harry, I want you to give your heart to Jesus. You know I have long prayed to this end, and I asked you to come out here that we might settle this great

question.' Out there in the park I gave my heart to the Lord, and now I want to be baptized and live among his people."

Deal with the individual alone. There is delicacy and a sense of sensitive shrinking in these deep matters of the heart. Young people do not open their inner selves freely in the presence of their associates. The heart may close, and the deeper impressions may vanish if the question of personal religion be urged under such conditions. At least one Christian worker recalls the painful ordeal of being thus dealt with, and doubtless the experience of the one has been the experience of many. There are times, to be sure, in the great congregation when under the power of the Spirit it may seem easy and natural to speak a word or make a plea; at such times there may be even greater freedom than when two are alone together. The point of concern is that there shall be such absence of restraint, such easy freedom, as shall insure that the soul is at liberty quietly to face the real issue.

Pray much. Whoever will win souls must be much in prayer. God has appointed certain means, such as his Word and preaching and teaching for bringing to salvation. But these are not sufficient apart from the Holy Spirit. No sinner ever came under conviction of sin save by the power of the Spirit. No sinner ever apprehended the atonement and appropriated its pro-

visions, save through the operating in his heart of the blessed Spirit. Whatever gifts we possess, whatever influences we bring to bear, we must rely first and last on the divine Spirit to do his mighty work in the heart.

The Holy Spirit is given in answer to prayer. The first Pentecost came at the end of ten days of ceaseless prayer. "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him" (Luke 11 : 13). It is needful that we shall importune the lost to turn to God, but we may not forget nor neglect to importune God to be gracious to the lost.

Successful soul-winners, without exception, have been faithful and urgent in prayer. They rely on God for guidance as to the persons whom they shall approach, as to the time and method of such approach. They wait on God for power, that strange, indefinable, irresistible power which comes through the anointing of the Spirit. When their efforts seem to fail and hearts are as steel, they turn confidently to God and wait for help. They breathe the very breath of prayer and live in its holy atmosphere.

Lead the person whom you would win to pray. Lost souls are not saved without prayer, an earnest cry in their own behalf for mercy and pardon. They should be directed to approach

God in prayer; they should be instructed as to the petitions they are to make. Especially when we are seeking to lead them to a surrender to Christ, we should induce them to pray. If we can get them to kneel with us for prayer, if we can induce them to lift their voices to God either in their own words or in words which we may suggest, the way to surrender and trust becomes easy.

Find the clue to the soul. In every life there is some natural, easy way into the inner soul, some simple key which will fit that special door and open it for the gospel messenger and his message. We succeed in our efforts largely in proportion as we find that natural approach, and thus move along the line of least resistance.

A pastor visited a great business man in his office. A recent bereavement had befallen the man's family. He talked tenderly of his stricken wife and his sorrowing daughters, and spoke of their singular faith and beautiful devotion. The pastor thought he saw a clue to the castle of the man's soul. "You love this wife and these daughters; you grieve for them in their sorrow; would you like to do something which above all other things would bless them and make them supremely happy?" Without suspecting what was in the pastor's mind, the man said, "I would do anything in the world; make any sacrifice, suffer anything, to make my wife and daughters

supremely happy." The pastor said, quietly and earnestly, "The one thing which will bring them highest happiness will mean no sacrifice for you and will call for no suffering. If you will this day surrender your heart to God and trust Jesus Christ as a Saviour and go home and tell your wife and daughters that you have done so, their hearts will break for very happiness." The tactful pastor had found the weak spot in the strong man's armor; he had made the one appeal which could win the proud, sinful heart. The battle was severe, but short and decisive. The leader of men, the captain of finance, touched in the depths of his nature by the mute yearning of devout loved ones, yielded his soul to the cleansing and the keeping of the Friend of sinners.

Find out and remove difficulties. Much of our effort in soul-winning is ineffective because we fail at this point. We may urge a person to believe and trust Christ, when we might do better to seek out the secret indulgence, the unseen influence, which stands between the soul and Christ, and urge the confession and removal of the sin which constitutes an unsurmountable barrier.

A young man was under conviction for sin, and in distress and with evident sincerity was seeking the Lord. A Christian worker gave the usual instruction, presented again and again the way of life in Christ, but was disappointed in being unable to lead the seeking one to the Sa-

viour. The two knelt to pray together and the worker asked the seeker to offer the prayer, "Our Father which art in heaven," etc. The prayer proceeded to the petition, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." Here the voice ceased and the suppliant refused to proceed. Suddenly it dawned upon the worker that an unforgiving spirit stood in the way. In tender but faithful words it was made clear that this sin must be confessed and forsaken. At last, in slow, measured tones, the words were uttered, "Forgive us our trespasses *as we forgive those who trespass against us.*" Immediately the light dawned, and there was a sense of peace and acceptance with God.

A determination to hold to some sinful amusement, an obstinate refusal to do something which the Christian life may seem to require, any one of many things, may keep the soul from the kingdom of God. Be faithful; urge complete surrender and final submission.

Press for a decision. Much of our effort to win the lost fails because we do not dare to close in and strike for a verdict. We bear witness in timid fashion and hasten to leave the lost soul in its indecision. Joshua's memorable word, "Choose you *this day* whom ye will serve," should be our urgent plea. Are we not commissioned to *compel* them to come in? Such urgency and insistence is proper from every viewpoint.

The peril to which the lost soul is exposed, the yearning love of the divine heart, the promise of immediate pardon to the soul that yields, every high and worthy consideration demands that we shall patiently and persistently press for a decision.

RESTATEMENT.

In Dealing with Individuals.

I. Win respect and affection.
II. Seize the opportune time.
III. Deal with the individual alone.
IV. Pray much.
V. Lead the seeker to pray.
VI. Find the clue to the soul.
VII. Discover and remove difficulties.
VIII. Press for a decision.

To Guide and Test Study.

Why is it necessary to win respect and affection in order to win to Christ?

What of seizing the opportune time? Can such times be brought about? Give illustration of this.

Why is it wise to deal with the individual alone?

What of prayer in soul-winning?

What is meant by a clue to the soul?

Why should we lead the seeker to pray?

Name some difficulties which it is sometimes necessary to discover and remove in order to bring to Christ?

IX.

THE USE OF THE BIBLE IN WINNING TO CHRIST.

WHEN we come to the task of winning a soul to Christ, we do well to make use of the Word of God, the sword of the Spirit. There is no other weapon like this—pungent, powerful, convincing.

"Is not my word like as fire, and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" (Jer. 23: 29.)

"The Holy Scriptures which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 3: 15).

"Receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save your souls" (James 1: 21).

There are many excellent reasons for using the Word as our chief reliance.

God promises to use and bless his Word. "For as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater: so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which

I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isaiah 55: 10, 11).

God's Word produces conviction for sin. There can be no genuine experience of grace without conviction for sin; the deeper and more real the conviction, the deeper and more abiding are the fruits of the religious experience. It is the way of our age to think lightly concerning sin. No other words like the very words of Scripture can convince of sin.

God's Word produces faith. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Rom. 10: 17).

In all the ages the preaching which has produced faith has been the preaching which set forth the truth as God has revealed it in his Word. The personal testimony which has availed most has relied much on the simple Word of God. When on God's behalf we offer peace and pardon to lost men we ought to offer these on the basis of God's own promise. When we invite and urge men to believe we ought to offer them a definite word of God on the basis of which they may believe. The writer has often used for this purpose Romans 5: 6–8:

"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love

toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners Christ died for the ungodly." Twice over we have it here out of God's own Word that "Christ died for the ungodly." This, then, is a sure foundation for our faith.

God's Word is the means used by the Holy Spirit to regenerate us. This is clearly set forth in James 1: 18, where we read: "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth." It is also declared in 1 Peter 1: 23: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever."

In view of these facts, that God promises to use his Word, that the Word of God convicts of sin, that it produces faith, and that it is used by the Spirit as the means of regeneration, whoever would win souls will make it his chief reliance in dealing with the lost. In thus using the Word suffer the following suggestions:

1. Have the seeker to read the passage for himself. There is impressiveness and power in opening the Bible, and after pointing out the particular passage which we wish to use, having the one with whom we deal to read perhaps aloud the words of Scripture.

2. If we quote a passage it is well to precede the words of Scripture by the reference which indicates both that it is Scripture and where it is to be found. Thus if we wish to quote the words,

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree," we should say 1 Peter 2: 24, "Who," etc.

3. It is well to select two or three passages on vital points, such as sin, faith and confession, and to thoroughly familiarize ourselves with these, so that we can readily turn to them and can skillfully use them. On the whole, it seems better to rely on two or three apt passages to make a given impression than to risk confusing the mind with many passages.

(1) To produce conviction for sin use the following:

Isaiah 53: 6: "All we like sheep have gone astray: we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

Romans 3: 10, 23: "There is none righteous, no, not one;" "for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

Jeremiah 17: 9: "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked: who can know it?"

Emphasize the fact that "all" have sinned. Turn in the Bible to these verses and ask the one with whom you deal to read them. Pray that God's Spirit may use his Word to pierce the heart and produce conviction for sin.

(2) To produce faith and bring to a decision use—

Isaiah 53: 6: "It makes the way of salvation very plain. Read the first part of the verse to the inquirer, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way." Then ask, "Is that true of you?" and when he has thought it over and said, "Yes," then say to him, "Now, let us see what God has done with your sins," and read the remainder of the verse, "And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." What, then, is it necessary for you to do to be saved?" Very soon he can be led to see that all that is necessary for him to do is to accept the sin-bearer whom God has provided (*R. A. Torrey*).

1 Timothy 1: 15: "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief."

Ask the seeker, "Whom did Jesus come to save?" Hold him to this question until he says, "He came to save even the chief of sinners." "Then do you not think he is willing to save you?"

1 Peter 2: 24: "Who his own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree."

Press the question, "Whose sins did Jesus bear?" When he says, "our sins," then insist that this glorious fact be at once believed and acted on.

(3) To show the duty of public confession use—

Romans 10: 9: "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

Matthew 10: 32: "Whosoever, therefore, shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven."

RESTATEMENT.

I. Why use the Word?
   1. God promises to bless his Word.
   2. God's Word produces conviction.
   3. God's Word produces faith.
   4. God's Word is the means used in regeneration.

II. How use the Word?
   1. Have the seeker to read for himself.
   2. In quoting, name the chapter and verse.
   3. Select and use a few vital passages.

III. Some passages which may be used.
   1. To produce conviction:
      Isaiah 53: 6.
      Romans 3: 10, 23.
      Jeremiah 17: 9.
   2. To bring decision:
      Isaiah 53: 6.
      1 Timothy 1: 15.
      1 Peter 2: 24.

3. To show the duty of public confession.
   Romans 10: 9.
   Matthew 10: 32.

To Guide and Test Study.

Quote two Scriptures which indicate the power of the Word of God in bringing to salvation.

State three reasons for using the Bible in dealing with the lost.

Quote a passage to show that God promises to bless his Word.

Show that God's Word produces faith.

Prove from the Scriptures that God's Word is used as a means for our regeneration.

What three suggestions are made as to how to use the Word in soul-winning?

Why should the seeker be asked to read the Scripture for himself?

Quote two passages suitable for producing conviction of sin.

Quote two passages which may be used to bring to a decision for Christ.

Show how Isaiah 53: 6 may be used in winning to Christ.

What two things must one know and what one thing must he do in order to be saved?

Quote two Scriptures to show the duty of a public confession.

X.

DEALING WITH EXCUSES AND DIFFICULTIES.

WHEN in the parable of the Supper the servants went out to call those who were bidden, "They all with one consent began to make excuse." While the excuses which they rendered were various, it lies on the face of the story that the real reason was in all cases the same: they did not want to accept the invitation, they did not wish to be present at the feast. When we urge men to come to Christ, they meet us with many excuses and present many difficulties. We must know that the real difficulty is in all cases the same; they do not want Christ on the conditions which he requires; they do not desire to be saved. Our Lord expressed it when he said, "*Ye will not* come unto me that ye might have life." This unwillingness to come to Christ, this persistent refusal of Christ's advances, is a sure evidence of natural innate depravity, and is itself the essence of all sinfulness. Successful soul-winners must have a clear conviction of this inevitable natural indisposition to accept Christ and of its essential sinfulness.

While this basal fact must be kept clearly in mind, it is yet helpful and necessary that we

shall be able to deal with excuses as they may be made and to remove difficulties as they arise. We will especially need to know how to use the Word in dealing with the following classes:

Those who feel no conviction of sin, and hence have no desire to be saved.

Those who, convicted of sin, are anxious to be saved, but have difficulties.

Those who, convicted of sin, are anxious to be saved, but are ignorant of the way of life.

I. *Those who have no conviction of sin, and hence have no desire to be saved.*

This will constitute by far the largest number of the lost with whom we should deal. They feel no concern for their spiritual condition; they meet all of our approaches and our solicitude with cool indifference; they would be let alone. What is to be our attitude toward these who have no interest in our Lord and no concern about the eternal life which he offers?

1. *We are not to let them alone.* This is their desire, to be left alone, as it is our temptation. They would fain be left alone in their ease of conscience and in their indulgence of sin. They would have us think indeed that our efforts and our concern only drive them further away. Dr. W. B. Riley tells of some country youths in Kentucky who, making their way home near midnight, saw lying by the roadside a little mound covered with snow. Pushing back the

snow, they discovered to their amazement the body of a man; a neighbor had fallen in a drunken stupor and was now in evident peril of being frozen to death. The young men took in the situation in a moment, and realizing the man's peril, resolved to carry him safely home. But the man pleaded to be let alone, and when his pleas were unavailing, he resisted, cursing bitterly and fighting with all his might. The stalwart youths, one under either arm and one behind, marched the man down the road and never left him until they saw him safe in his own home.

Our lost friends wish to be left alone; above all things they would have us leave them undisturbed. But to leave them may mean death.

2. *We are to use such Scripture passages as will convince them of sin.*

(1) Read to your lost friend Matthew 22: 37, 38: "Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment."

Ask what is here said to be the first and great commandment. When in answer he has solemnly repeated the words of Jesus, ask him if he has done this? Show him that he owes two sets of obligations, that one goes *up* and concerns God while the other goes *out* and concerns our fellowmen. "Now, you may have fulfilled

every duty to your fellows, but what of this duty which is 'first and great,' to love God supremely?" Wait, and press this question, praying that the Holy Spirit will send conviction.

(2) Use also James 2: 10: "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."

There is unity in the divine law; broken in one point it is broken in all. If a man be suspended by a chain of ten links, and one of these links shall break, the man falls as surely as if every link had broken at the same time. Ask the lost one to read slowly these words of James 2: 10. Then ask him if he has not "offended in one point."

(3) Use Heb. 10: 28, 29: "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses. Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"

Show the one whom you seek to win that to reject Christ is the greatest of sins. Ask him if he knows that in refusing Christ he has "trodden under foot the Son of God." Let him read for himself, that he hath counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace. Wait and pray

till the Spirit bears in on the soul a conviction of sin, for we may be well assured that without conviction of sin there is no remission.

II. *Those who, convicted of sin, are anxious to be saved, but have difficulties.*

This is a more hopeful state. When a sense of sin has been aroused and there is even the slightest desire to be saved, our task is definite and clear. We are, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to hasten to remove the barriers which stand in the way of perfect trust. Note some of the difficulties which we are sure to encounter:

1. "I am too great a sinner. God cannot save me."

If one makes this statement with any semblance of sincerity, there is bright hope for his early conversion; he is "not far from the kingdom." At first Satan makes us believe that we are good enough to be saved without Christ; later he would persuade us that we are so bad that even Christ cannot save us.

(1) Use Luke 19: 10: 'For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Why did the Son of man come? Who is it Christ came to seek and save? Press these questions until the sinner answers them for himself. If a trained surgeon comes into a group of men, some of whom are in perfect physical condition and some of whom are maimed and crippled,

which class of these men will attract the eye and heart of the surgeon?

(2) Use also 1 Tim. 1 : 15 : "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."

"One Sunday morning a man who had led a wild and wandering life and who had recently lost $35,000 and had been separated from his wife, said to me, in response to my question, why he was not a Christian, 'I am too great a sinner to be saved.' I turned at once to 1 Tim. 1 : 15. He quickly replied, 'Well, I am the chief of sinners.' 'Well,' I said, 'that verse means you then.' He replied, 'It is a precious promise.' I said, 'Will you accept it now?' and he said, 'I will.' Then I said, 'Let us kneel down and tell God so,' and we knelt down and he confessed to God his sins, and asked God for Christ's sake to forgive him his sins. I asked him if he had really accepted Christ, and he said he had. I asked him if he really believed that he was saved, and he said he did. He took an early opportunity of confessing Christ. He left the city in a short time, but I was able to follow him. He became a most active Christian, working at his business day times, but engaged in some form of Christian work every night in the week. He was reunited to his wife, and adopted a little child out of an orphan asylum and had a happy Christian home" (*Dr. R. A. Torrey*).

2. "I have no feeling."

Many people find difficulty in that though they wish to be saved, they do not experience the feeling which they somehow expect.

(1) Show this class that God's order is "fact, faith and feeling."

Fact. God begins with facts. It is a fact that God loves sinful men. It is a fact that in due time Christ died for the ungodly. It is a fact that salvation is offered on the basis of unconditional surrender and childlike trust. These are facts and with them we do well to begin. Ponder them well.

Faith. God next asks faith. "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." We see the historical fact that *Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures* and thus satisfied the divine law making salvation possible *to him that believeth.*

Feeling. When the soul by faith has planted itself on the fact of Christ's atoning merit and has been forgiven, then comes feeling, the feeling of joy and love and gratitude. This clearly is God's order.

Alas that the sinner in his blindness and self-conceit should wish to reverse this order and should expect and demand feeling first and refuse to exercise faith until God has given feeling.

(2) Use Isaiah 55: 7: "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his

thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God for he will abundantly pardon."

God here demands that the sinner *shall forsake his way*. He does not require that the sinner shall have *certain feelings*. In no other departments of life or duty do we wait for feeling. In the chapter on "Interpreting the Religious Experience," the various phases of feeling which may accompany conversion are discussed.

3. *"There is someone whom I cannot forgive."*

(1) Show them that they must forgive. To foster the spirit of resentment is to harbor fires in the heart which will burn and destroy. Our hatred of another does not necessarily injure that other, but it does necessarily and greatly injure ourselves. This yielding to resentment so far from indicating strength is born of weakness. It is a flaming fire, an eating cancer, a deadly virus. We *must* forgive, whether or not we care to become Christians.

(2) Show them that they *can* forgive. Indeed, when one says, "I cannot forgive," he would better say, "I will not forgive." Besides, what we cannot do unaided and in our own strength, we can easily do with the help of God's Holy Spirit. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

(3) God cannot forgive us our sins except we forgive those who sin against us.

Use Mark 11 : 25, 26: "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses."

(4) *"I fear I cannot hold out."*

(*a*) Use 2 Tim. 1 : 12: "For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

Christ assumes responsibility for our keeping; we are not any longer to keep ourselves. The headlight of the great locomotive engine throws its light only a few hundred yards ahead; as the engine drives forward in the darkness, the light keeps well ahead. It would be a foolish engineer who would sit down and demand that light be flashed all the way to his destination. Ask the sinner to accept Christ and walk out with him, trusting that light and help will be given for every emergency.

(*b*) Use also Jude 24: "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy."

III. *Those who, convicted of sin, are anxious to be saved, but do not know the plan of salvation.*

These are not difficult to deal with. The three Scriptures discussed in the last chapter under *bringing to a decision* may be used here.

1. God offers salvation upon two conditions:

(1) Repentance. Show that what God requires first of every sinner is that he shall repent.

Luke 13: 3: "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

Three things are involved in the duty to repent: (a) A new thought, a new view, of sin; (b) a new feeling toward sin, a recognition of its heinousness in God's sight; (c) a new attitude toward sin, a turning from it.

Isaiah 55: 7: "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

(2) Faith. John 1: 12: "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."

"A woman once came to me in great agitation. After many ineffectual attempts she was at last able to unburden her heart. Fourteen years before she had killed a man, and had borne the

memory of the act upon her conscience until it had almost driven her crazy. When she told the story to another Christian and myself, we turned to Isaiah 53: 6. After reading the verse very carefully to her, I asked her what the Lord had done with her sin. After a few moments' deep and anxious thought, she said, 'He has laid it on Christ.' I took a book in my hand. 'Now,' I said, 'let my right hand represent you, and my left hand Christ, and this book your sin. I laid the book upon my right hand and I said, 'Where is your sin now?' She said, 'On me.' 'Now,' I said, 'what has God done with it?' She said, 'Laid it on Christ,' and I laid the book over on the other hand. 'Where is your sin now?' I asked. It was long before she could summon courage to answer, and then with a desperate effort she said, 'On Christ.' I said, 'Then is it on you any longer?' Slowly the light came into her face and she burst out with a cry, 'No, it is on him, it is on Christ'" (*Dr. R. A. Torrey, in "How to Bring Men to Christ"*).

2. God requires as evidence of this salvation and in gratitude for it:

(1) That we *confess* Christ before the world.

Matthew 10: 32, 33: "Whosoever, therefore, shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven."

Romans 10: 9, 10: "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

The divinely given method of making our first great confession of Christ is the ordinance of baptism. It is well enough to sign a card, to stand up, to go forward, in any way to confess Christ; but the initial confession in which we definitely and before the world separate between the old life and the new is the act of baptism. We are then by word and work and life to confess Christ daily and hourly before the world.

(2) That we accept Christ *as Lord of our lives.*

Acts 2: 36: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

(3) That we *work out* our salvation.

Phil. 2: 12, 13: "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

Christ is to be Lord as well as Saviour. He is to be the arbiter of our conduct and henceforth our business is to serve him. We are saved that we may save and serve.

In the preceding chapters we have studied with various angles of approach the art of soul-winning. Before we turn to a consideration of further and fuller steps in winning to Christ, we pause to enter a plea for what Prof. L. R. Scarborough has called "the organization of an evangelistic phalanx in the church life for the winning of men." The pastor who will lead his church forces afield for the lost will wish to have every organization within the church, the Sunday school, the organized classes, the B. Y. P. U., the Sunbeams, the Royal Ambassadors, the Young Women's Auxiliary, the Woman's Missionary Society, enlisted and praying and working to this end. He will form and train an inner circle of spiritually-minded souls who will be ready at his call or at the call of the Holy Spirit to deal personally with the lost. These will watch in the regular congregations for indications and evidences of the Spirit's presence and work with the lost; they will go with the pastor when he goes with his saving message to the mission, or the factory, or the shop, or the street meeting; these will follow the

pastor both as individuals and in groups with their prayers as he goes to other communities in evangelistic effort. With this praying and winning circle at the center of the church life, the pastor can lead the church to deliver for evangelism its full and constant force upon the community and to touch through its gifts for missions the remotest bounds of the earth. Such churches approximate in method and spirit the churches of apostolic times.

RESTATEMENT.

Dealing with Excuses and Difficulties.

Back of all excuses,
Ye *will not* come.

I. Those who have no conviction of sin and no desire to be saved.
   1. We are not to let them alone.
   2. Use such Scriptures as will convince of sin.
      (1) Matthew 22: 37, 38.
      (2) James 2: 10.
      (3) Hebrews 10: 28, 29.

II. Those who would be saved, but have difficulties.
   1. "I am too great a sinner."
      (1) Luke 19: 10.
      (2) 1 Timothy 1: 15.
   2. "I have no feeling."
      (1) God's order is fact, faith, feeling.
      (2) Isaiah 55: 7.
   3. "There is someone I cannot forgive."
      (1) We *must* forgive.

(2) We *can* forgive.
(3) Else God will not forgive us. Mark 11: 25, 26.

4. "I fear I cannot hold out."
(1) 2 Timothy 1: 12.
(2) Jude 24.

III. Those who wish to be saved, but do not know how.

1. God offers salvation on two conditions:
(1) Repentance. Luke 13: 3.
(2) Faith. John 1: 12.

2. God requires as evidence that we are saved:
(1) That we *confess* Christ. Matthew 10: 32.
(2) That we accept Christ as *Lord*. Acts 2: 36.
(3) That we *work out* our salvation. Philippians 2: 12, 13.

To Guide and Test Study.

What is the real reason why lost souls are not saved? What three classes do we consider in this chapter?

What two suggestions are made as to dealing with those who do not desire to be saved? Quote three passages of Scripture suitable for dealing with this class and show how each passage may be used.

Name four excuses or difficulties which are discussed. Quote two Scriptures suitable for dealing with those who feel that they are too sinful to be saved. What two suggestions are made as to those who have no feeling? What three suggestions are made as to those who say they cannot forgive? Quote two passages suitable for those who fear they cannot hold out.

What two suggestions are made for those who wish to be saved, but do not know how? What is it to repent? What is it to believe? What three things does God require as evidence of salvation?

XI.

BRINGING TO BAPTISM.

IN the fullness of time, when we have brought the lost soul to accept Jesus as a personal Saviour, we will want also to bring him to a public confession of the Saviour in baptism.

"Infant baptism is something entirely apart. As a principle and practice it is an occasion of division among Christians; it has no mention in the New Testament, although baptism is a New Testament ordinance and has there every law for its government, as to subject and form and design. True, baptizing infants is not forbidden in the New Testament by word; and yet it is even more powerfully prohibited by the very nature of the ordinance and by its requirement and meaning for the individual. Baptism is not possible for infants simply because it is utterly beyond them" (*Dr. J. M. Frost, in "Moral Dignity of Baptism"*).

In bringing repentant children to baptism, two questions arise.

I. How early shall the child be permitted or encouraged to come to baptism? We have no need to raise this question of age as regards coming to Jesus, for the Master himself has settled that question for us: "Suffer the little

children, and forbid them not, to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." The word translated "little children" is a diminutive of the word which means boys and girls, and is limited only by the ability to "come." But how early shall children be encouraged to offer themselves for baptism? This is a question which perplexes many parents and Christian workers. What measure of maturity, what development, what grasp of the ordinances, the church, the plan of salvation, should we expect before we encourage baptism? This is a matter of grave and delicate moment to all who will deal with young life.

1. Children vary widely in their development. One child may think and feel as deeply at eight as another at twelve. One child may be more mature as regards spiritual things and spiritual experiences than another child who is much older in years. We cannot, therefore, state any age for baptism, and it would hardly be safe to suggest even an approximate age.

2. The Scriptures give no specific direction, leaving us here as elsewhere to work out and apply certain fundamental principles. This being true, we may well be guarded in our expressions and tolerant of those who may reach other conclusions.

3. Baptism is a public confession of Jesus as Lord and Saviour; it carries with it a life align-

ment. It may be safely inferred that baptism should come as early as there appear to be sure evidences that mind and heart have yielded to the Saviour, and that he is enthroned as Lord. On the other hand, inasmuch as the ordinance is to be observed once for all and is a matter involving life committal it would seem that baptism ought not to come so early as not to be remembered with distinctness in later years, or before there is some ability to grasp the mighty significance of the step.

4. Under the old dispensation, the Jewish lad became a "son of the law," took his place as a member of the great family of Jehovah, about the age of twelve. This, of course, is merely suggestive; and it must be borne in mind that life with us advances more rapidly and matures much earlier than in the days of the Hebrew commonwealth.

5. Both Scripture and experience seem to favor an early age for baptism. When the Spirit of God has wrought his work of grace in the heart—and parents and teachers must patiently discern the Spirit's working—there may be positive harm to the whole life if consent or encouragement to be baptized is withheld. Faith is at first timid and hesitating, and it requires the strengthening which comes from recognition and confession.

An old story which has gone the rounds points the lesson. Eleven-year-old Henry desired to unite with the church and be baptized. Said Henry's father, "I have no objection to your being baptized, but I am not sure that you will hold out. Let's wait a year or so, and see how you get along." The boy of course submitted to the word of the father. A few days later, during cold and stormy weather Henry was told to go and shut in the flock of sheep for the night. After nightfall the father heard suspicious sounds. Calling the boy, he said, "Henry, did you shut in those sheep?" The boy hesitated a moment and said, "Father, I turned all the sheep in except one little lamb. It looked so little and frail I doubted whether it could hold out. I thought if it survived the night I would take it in tomorrow." The father felt the force of the hint, and said, "My boy, you may join the church whenever you wish."

Some pastors have found it worth while to make and keep a special list of the boys and girls who have confessed Christ and yet who for any reason may not have been baptized. These are regarded and treated as believers and are encouraged to go forward in various forms of Christian service. This measure of recognition serves to confirm their faith and to make possible a further development of Christian life and is especially desirable when baptism and church membership

are not deemed advisable. A wise mother said awhile ago, "My children have all very early given evidence of saving faith in Jesus. All of them desired to unite with the church at an age so young that I thought it best to have them wait. But I never questioned the reality of their faith, nor told them that they were too young. I told them that I believed in them and that I believed they were really trusting the Lord. I regarded them, and taught them to regard themselves, as believers. Later, when I felt that it was right, I gave my consent for them to be baptized."

II. What if parents should oppose baptism?

The evangelistic spirit and effort ought to reside in the home; parents ought to be foremost in seeking the salvation of their children. And yet it seems right that out of the Sunday school and the church there should come zeal and effort for the lost which shall reinforce and strengthen the efforts of the home.

Where evangelistic fires burn in the Sunday school and in the church, and ceaseless efforts are made to bring the youth to salvation, there will inevitably arise problems in connection with the home and the parents. It will many times be necessary after you have brought about the child's conversion to expend even more effort in converting the parent, in bringing the parent to believe in the child's conversion, and in getting his consent to the child's baptism. It is worth

while to consider patiently the position the parent takes in the matter.

1. If the father and mother object to the baptism of the child, the difficulties may lie in one of these directions:

(1) The parents may be themselves unconverted If they have not themselves trusted the Lord and obeyed him in baptism there can be little wonder that they are indifferent concerning the obedience of the child. And yet it ought to be said that there is usually that in the parental heart which somehow longs to see the child come into right relation with God. Even if the parent is not saved, there will usually be found that in his heart which gives response to honest effort to seek the highest spiritual welfare of his child.

(2) The difficulty may grow out of the fact that the parent is cold and backslidden in life. When we drift from the Father our eyes become dim and our hearts dull, so that we are slow to perceive the Spirit's working. It is only when we ourselves have the joy of salvation that we are concerned to teach sinners in God's ways.

(3) The opposition of the parent may grow out of the fact that he is not informed as to what has been done for the child and has not been apprised of the indications of interest on his part. In the Sunday school, which the parent possibly does not attend, prayers have been offered, efforts have been made and developments have come,

concerning which the parent has little or no information. The child is not likely to tell at home what he has felt and what has been done in these lines in the Sunday school. In some cases the first information that reaches the parent of all that is being done and has been doing for months, is that the child wishes to be baptized. Naturally the discreet parent feels a measure of difficulty.

(4) The parent may not be instructed concerning his sacred and urgent obligation to guide the child along in a definite and positive way as regards acceptance of Christ and obedience in baptism. Many parents appear to feel that if they prevent the child from taking a wrong course they have performed their whole duty. The soul of the child is stirred and, conscious of sin and need, he wishes to "join the church." It is not enough to prevent the child from making the mistake of seeking church membership when he ought to seek Christ. Instead of denying consent for the child's baptism, let the parent give himself in this opportune time to leading the child to Christ, quietly holding baptism and church membership in abeyance until the time comes for their consideration.

Parents should know that when the Holy Spirit is moving upon the child's nature, great concern is to be felt and much care is to be exercised to guide along wisely in harmony with the divine moving. Such seasons of spiritual interest do

not come at our call. A father objected to the baptism of his beautiful and tender twelve-year-old daughter, saying that he wanted her to grow older and try the world somewhat to see whether then she would really wish to lead a Christian life. Six years later, when the girl had become swept with worldliness and her soul fettered with worldly habits, the father besought her in vain, with tears and a broken heart, to accept Christ and live the life of a Christian. This father's name is legion. He learned too late that spiritual interest comes of the work of God's mighty Spirit and that it is the part of wisdom to fall in with the working of that Spirit, using our utmost endeavor to bring to Christ at such seasons as he may choose.

(5) The parent may not be convinced that the child has really experienced the necessary change. The parent is converted, he is revived, he is informed, but he is not convinced. He knows his child and has watched him closely—he knows perhaps that he is of emotional temperament and can be easily influenced. He feels no assurance that there is seriousness and depth of conviction. He rightly demands evidence that a work of grace has been wrought in the child before he consents to his baptism.

2. How shall we coöperate with the home and the parents in bringing the child to baptism?

(1) We shall be reverent and regardful of the father and mother. We will remember that they, as well as we, are concerned for the spiritual welfare of the child. We will instruct the child to revere and respect the will of his parents. We will not baptize the child, nor encourage the child to seek baptism, until the consent of the parents has been secured. It will be wiser for the child to wait and by consistent living convince his elders that he is really in earnest, than for him to disregard their will.

(2) We will keep the parents informed as developments come. If we are praying for the boy and seeking his salvation, we will let the parent know of the fact; if the child asks for prayer or confesses the Saviour or makes any other public manifestations, we will immediately communicate the information to the home. This keeping of the parents in closest touch with all of our efforts will serve many good purposes and in most cases will solve the problem of getting the parents' consent to the baptism of the child, when at last he is converted.

(3) We will, if need be, become the child's advocate and plead his case with the father and mother. It is good for the pastor or teacher to sit in the home with the parents and in the presence of the child to declare the conviction that the child sincerely loves and trusts the Lord. "You have trusted Jesus, haven't you, Jack?"

"And you feel that he has forgiven your sins and saved you?" "Yes, and I believe it, too. I have watched you these weeks and I think the time has come when you ought to be baptized, if your father will give his consent, and I hope he will." Evangelistic pastors and other workers could tell of fine experience where they have gone out to open the way for a timid boy or girl to obedience in baptism.

(4) While we deal with the parent in behalf of the child, we will earnestly seek the salvation or spiritual welfare of the parent himself. At least one pastor has at times felt to rebuke himself for his lack of faith and courage to seek the salvation of parents while he was zealous for the children. This pastor was sitting in a beautiful home pleading with a mother, who was not herself a believer, for permission to baptize her child. The mother said, "Preacher, how is it you are so much concerned about my child, and yet you do not seem to take account of the fact that I am myself lost? Ever since my child first came home from your Sunday school talking about the Saviour and his love, my heart has been breaking to become a Christian."

The same pastor walked out one Sunday afternoon to see a poor drunkard about his boy, and to seek consent for the boy to be baptized. The child sat on the father's knee while the pastor and the father talked the matter over. At length,

the father asked the boy to go out and play while he talked further with the minister. When the child was gone, the man turned to the preacher. "Yes, you may baptize my boy. But what I want to know is, why do you not seem to care about me? Is there no hope for me; have you no faith that I can be saved?" The season of spiritual interest on the part of the child offers a rare opportunity to deal with the parent, whether he be lost or backslidden in heart. "A little child shall lead them." Many a child has led his father and mother back to God.

RESTATEMENT.

Bringing to Baptism.

Infant baptism "is a thing apart."

I. How early may children come to baptism?
   1. Children vary widely.
   2. Scripture gives no specific direction.
   3. Baptism is a life alignment.
      (1) Hence should come early.
      (2) Should not come too early.
   4 Hebrew lads became "sons of the law" at twelve.
   5 Scripture and experience favor an early age for baptism.
   6. Recognize and guide them as believers, even when baptism must be deferred.

II. What if parents oppose baptism?
   1. Some explanations of such opposition.
      (1) Parents may be unsaved.

(2) May be backslidden.
(3) May be uninformed.
(4) May be uninstructed.
(5) May be unconvinced.

2. How coöperate with the home in this matter.
   (1) Respect the parents and teach the child to do so.
   (2) Keep parents informed as to what is doing.
   (3) Be the child's advocate with the parent.
   (4) Seek the salvation of the parents at this time.

To Guide and Test Study.

Why is "infant baptism" something entirely apart?

What two questions may arise in bringing repentant children to baptism?

Why do we not need to raise any question as to age in the matter of coming to Jesus?

What bearing does the wide variation in children have on the question as to how early children may be baptized?

What as to specific Scripture direction?

What cautions grow out of the fact that baptism carries with it a life alignment?

Do you favor baptizing repentant children at an early age? Why?

What of special recognition of those who for any reason must defer baptism?

Name some reasons why parents may oppose the baptism of their children.

Name four suggestions as to coöperation with the home in bringing the child to baptism.

Why is this a favorable time to make effort for the spiritual betterment of parents?

XII.

TEACHING CONCERNING THE CHURCH.

WINNING to Christ is by no means accomplished when we have brought to conversion. The process of discipling is hardly complete until we have brought to public confession. A part of the winning, and a vital part of it, is the winning to a right relation to the organized work of our Lord, to a right alignment with his church. We seek to win the child not only to Christ as Saviour, but to Christ as a conquering Captain. We seek to save not only the child's soul, but to save and enlist his life in the army of our King. It means much in the matter of Christian character and Christian service that the life shall be rightly aligned with the organized forces of Christ's earthly kingdom.

The organization of the forces of the kingdom into churches is divinely given and ordered.

This divinely given organization was born in the thought of God, is dear to the heart of God, and has been perpetuated by the Spirit of God. God thought it and gave it to the world for the preservation and propagation of the gospel.

All that we know of God in nature leads us to believe that in giving to men the priceless gospel he would give with it and for it a definite

and suitable form of organization. For every phase of life God has with infinite pains and wisdom given a special type of organization for its encasing and protection. It is a matter of ceaseless interest to trace out in nature these outward forms which inclose and protect life. Is it to be supposed that in giving the gospel which is to be the life of the world, God will be indifferent to the forms of organization by which that life is to be encased and through which it is offered to men?

Moreover, outward organization *reflects the life which it encloses.* There is always a fine correspondence between the life and the forms which encase it. Indeed, the inward life produces and thus determines the outward organization. The scientist can readily go from the animal to the shell which constitutes its home, or *vice versa.* He can go from the seed to the casing or *vice versa.* The gospel makes and requires for itself certain forms of organization. These forms become an essential part of the gospel itself. The life planted by Jesus and augmented at Pentecost grew its own forms of organization. We are permitted to see this growth and to note this progress in the Acts and the Epistles. These forms of organization are the more vital and sacred, the more rigidly to be adhered to, because they are the growth and product of the gospel and are thus part and parcel of the gospel.

Surely, the questions of church organization, of church officers, of the ordinances, are not to be determined by caprice or whim, nor are they in any wise to be lightly regarded.

Baptist doctrines make Baptist polity. Catholic doctrines make Catholic polity. Believing as they do concerning the individual conscience and concerning the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures, Baptists must of necessity maintain the forms of organization which grow out of these beliefs. Believing as Catholics do in these matters, it is inevitable that their organized life should reflect their beliefs.

It is also true that organization *affects the truth which it expresses*. It is impossible to change the forms of organization without affecting the doctrines involved in such forms. A change of view as to the content of the ordinance of baptism was both the cause and the effect of the change made in certain quarters in the mode of its administration. Changing the mode of baptism has changed the conception of certain doctrines involved in baptism. Changes in church government or church ordinances affect, as all history attests, the doctrines which underlie these things.

"Where did the church come from? This question points to the beginning of individual churches, not of 'The Church,' as the phrase goes, and which is purely a growth in history much

this side of the New Testament period and contrary to both the teaching and spirit of the New Testament.

"The church is here because, like the family, God thought it, planned it after his own choosing, commanded it through his own appointed agencies, and set it for the high mission of working out his providence and grace.

"As he hath set the solitary in families, so also hath he set the saved in churches, and made the church the embodiment of his work of grace and the expression of his kingdom among men" (*Dr. J. M. Frost, in "Our Church Life"*).

It is possible to know what is this divinely given organization. Every consideration which goes to prove that there is such an organization goes also to bind us to the belief that God will make it clear to us in his Word. In the Acts and the Epistles, where the organization grows before our eyes, we have for our guidance both precept and precedent. We may by a little patient effort make out the divine model. Then we may take the many and conflicting claimants of our day and put them down on this model. The one among them all which most nearly conforms to the original must command our adherence.

It is both duty and privilege to guide the young into alliance and alignment with the New Testament church. Certainly we will not coerce nor

seek to wield any undue influence. Nor will we seal our lips and withhold instruction in these grave matters. There are those who, fearing to abridge the right of individual choice, insist that we must not influence the growing child as regards the church. But we are accustomed in every line of life to guide the young life toward the things which we count high and right. This is a responsibility which each generation must assume for the growing generation.

In these grave matters of church alignment, we may not leave our youth to chance or caprice; we may not leave them in their immaturity without guidance and instruction. The parent, the pastor, the teacher, must be faithful in guiding and instructing concerning these vital questions.

When one has been approved for baptism and is looking toward the ordinance, his heart is peculiarly open to instruction concerning the church and its ordinances. This has from the earliest Christian centuries been regarded as a favorable time for such instruction. Young converts may be formed into classes and given careful and systematic instruction. All of the denominational publishing houses are prepared to furnish catechisms or brief treatises for this purpose. It will suffice here to outline the instruction most needed, assuming, of course, that instruction has already been given in the vital truths of the gospel.

Teach concerning the church. The child is soon to take his place in the church. His heart is filled with sacred reverence for the great things to which he is coming. Perhaps never again will he be just quite so eager to learn of these sacred things. The impressions made now he will carry through life. Master the following great thoughts with reference to the church taken from "Our Church Life," by Dr. J. M. Frost, and pass them on to the child:

1. God gave the church.

"The church is here because, like the family, God thought it, planned it after his own choosing, commanded it through his own appointed agencies, and set it for the high mission of working out his providence and grace.

"It is entirely scriptural and accordant with all the facts, to count the church as emanating from the creative energy of God. Concerning the mountains and the stars and all created things, God spoke the word and it was done; so concerning the church, as concerning the family also, God commanded and these came into being—the family first in point of time and then the church taking its place as God's creation and appointment for the good of mankind and his glory among men."

2. God gave the church to be a voice for himself.

"A church stands for God in Christ, and for the kingdom of God among men. This is distinct and basal in its very structure. Nature is a revelation of God. But in the church, in the making of the church, there is additional revelation of himself.

"Its worship is the worship of God, who is glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders. In receiving members, the church declares what God hath wrought in the working of his grace; in its ordinations, whether of deacons or of preachers, while imparting nothing of grace or gift, the church yet recognizes God's choice and declares his call for these men; its very house of worship has become the house of God; its ordinances are declarative of what God hath done; and its preaching of the gospel is but proclaiming the kingdom of God as his mighty witness among the nations of the earth. These things in its life and work and ordinances, make the church a voice for God."

3. Christ purchased the church with his own blood.

"God's plan and purpose named the purchase price, which Christ freely paid in the shedding of his blood on the cross. The price is of infinite worth and unwasting fullness.

"Thou dying Lamb, thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed church of God
Be saved to sin no more."

4. God has preserved and perpetuated the church throughout the ages.

"The persistence of the church commands our attention and awakens our song. The church persists because of the keeping power of God, and this is in line with the fulfillment of his promise.

5. A New Testament church is composed of those who, upon a public confession of repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, have been baptized into the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. New Testament churches had in their membership only baptized believers.

6. The church officers set forth in the New Testament are two—pastors (or elders) and deacons (Phil. 1 : 1).

7. The special ordinances of the New Testament were two, baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Teach concerning baptism. The child is shortly to be baptized. This event is to stand out in his memory ever afterward with increasing sacredness and beauty. He hungers now to know its deep, sweet significance. All too many believers could tell how after conversion they

were hurried on to baptism without being instructed either in its sacredness or its meaning. A Christian worker whose fame is in all the churches said, "If only someone had taken me when I was awaiting baptism and had told me its deep and blessed significance! Such instruction at that time might have impressed my whole after life."

We will need to instruct as to the mode of baptism. Why should the child be left to get his impressions on this subject from the conversations of the street or of the playground? Read to him the story of our Lord's baptism (Mark 1: 9, 10), and lead him to draw his own conclusions as to what baptism was in New Testament times.

Have him read aloud the story of the baptism of the Ethiopian treasurer (Acts 8: 38, 39), in which the Holy Spirit is at pains to describe for us with much vividness the act of baptism. Ask him to look with you at the great passage (Romans 6: 4), where the Spirit declares we are "buried with Christ by baptism into death."

The young believer ought to be instructed both as to the act and the design of baptism. In imparting such instruction the following outline taken from "A Confession of Faith," by F. H. Kerfoot, may be used:

"1. As to the act, it is immersion in water. Read Acts 8: 38, 39.

"2. As to the design:

"(1) It is a confession of Jesus Christ our Saviour and of our allegiance to the triune of God. Read Gal. 3: 27.

"(2) It is the answer of a good conscience toward God. Read 1 Peter 3: 21.

"(3) It is the symbol by the washing of water of the inward cleansing. Read Titus 3: 5.

"(4) It is a symbol of our having been buried to a life of willful sinfulness and of our having been raised again to walk in newness of life on earth. Read Rom. 6: 3–5.

"(5) It is the symbol of our having died with Jesus Christ, and of our having been raised with him into a life of acceptance before God; and also of our final resurrection with him to life everlasting. Hence, we reject the doctrine of sprinkling and pouring for baptism, as the setting aside of the true ordinance, both as to the act and its signification, and the substitution therefor of human tradition. Read Col. 2: 12."

Teach concerning the Lord's Supper. The young convert should be instructed as regards the Memorial Supper of our Lord. A minister thus describes his own first coming to the table: "I knew somehow that having been baptized, I was at liberty to partake of the Supper, though no one mentioned the matter and no special invitation was given. I sat back in the church and wondered if the deacon would come my way. I

had no intelligent idea of what it all meant, and am fearful that that first communion was not the means of grace it should have been." Contrast this experience with that of another Christian worker: "I had been instructed with much care as to what the Supper meant. My heart was filled with the thought that the bread before me spoke of my Lord's body and the wine of his blood, and that in partaking I was to do so as a memorial, a reminder, of my Saviour's death. Along with others recently baptized I was asked to sit at the front; the arms of the church seemed to be about us. The pastor gave a warm welcome and the elements were passed to us first. I can never quite get away from the sweetness of that first blessed hour at the Lord's table."

The following taken also from Dr. F. H. Kerfoot, may serve as a guide in teaching concerning the Supper:

1. What the Supper is:

"A memorial ordinance, intrusted to the churches to commemorate the offering of the Lord's body and his shed blood till he comes."

2. Preceded by baptism.

"A careful examination of these ordinances as appointed by Christ, and of their essential meaning, and of the way in which they are observed by the apostles, will show that baptism, which is administered but once and for all time, should precede the Lord's Supper."

3. The unbaptized not to be invited.

"And inasmuch as God's Word gives us no warrant whatever for inviting unbaptized persons to the table, which is the Lord's table, we dare not allow our Christian sympathies to lead us into giving such invitations, lest we be found changing the order of God's Word and ministering to the confusion and obscurity of God's truth."

4. Not to decide questions of fellowship.

"We reject the idea that the Lord's Supper is designed to celebrate love among Christians, or is an ordinance for deciding questions of fellowship either in an individual church or between churches."

5. Our duty is plain.

"In declining to invite members of other denominations, we do not question their piety at all, but only declare that we believe them according to the example and command of Christ, to be unbaptized persons and not walking in the New Testament order of ordinances. Read 1 Cor. 11: 17–34.

"And for this, as in all things, we appeal to the Bible.

"May the Lord give light and knowledge and the Spirit of the Covenant."

RESTATEMENT.

Win not only to confession of Christ, but to alignment with his organized kingdom.

I. There is a divinely given organization.

II. It is possible to know what this is.

III. It is our duty to guide the young here.

IV. Teach concerning the church.
   1. God gave it.
   2. As a voice for himself.
   3. Purchased it with his own blood.
   4. Has preserved and perpetuated it.
   5. Is composed of baptized believers.
   6. Officers: Pastors and deacons.
   7. Ordinances: Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

V. Teach concerning baptism.
   1. Its act.
   2. Its design.

VI. Teach concerning the Supper.
   1. A memorial ordinance.
   2. Preceded by baptism.
   3. The unbaptized not to be invited.
   4. Not to decide questions of fellowship.
   5. Our duty is plain.

To Guide and Test Study.

In winning to Christ, what ought to follow conversion?

Why should we expect that God would give a definite organization for his kingdom? Why is this question

of organization of vital moment? Where did the church come from?

Where do we learn concerning the nature and organization of churches?

What as to our duty to guide the young in the matter of church alignment? What of their special instruction at the season of baptism?

Name with brief discussion each of the four statements concerning the church.

How may we best teach as to the mode of baptism? What does baptism signify? What as to the dignity of the ordinance?

Why teach young converts concerning the Supper? What shall we teach them as to this ordinance?

XIII.

INTERPRETING TO THE YOUNG BELIEVER HIS RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.

IT is a high privilege to walk with a growing child and to interpret to him the voice of God. When the open voice of Jehovah came first to the child Samuel, he was deeply perplexed. Turning confidently to the aged Eli, he sought for guidance and explanation. Nothing could more reflect credit upon the noble prophet than the freeness with which the child turned to him for an interpretation of the mysterious voice. Happy are we and the children about us if we can keep open the door between them and us, and if we can sustain such relation to them as will invite them to bring to us their spiritual perplexities. "Now, Samuel did not yet know the Lord, neither was the Lord yet revealed unto him." Eli was himself a bit dull at first, but gradually it dawned upon him that the Lord was manifesting himself to the child, and he hastened to interpret to the child the things of God.

Others will be found to walk with the youth and to interpret to him life in its various phases; it is for the pastor and teacher to walk with him and interpret to him his religious experiences.

Especially are we to interpret to the child the great religious experience by which he came into fellowship with God and became partaker of his grace. All the after years will be a deepening revelation of what God wrought in that first mighty work of grace. In class, in conversation and elsewhere, we may teach as follows regarding religious experiences:

1. *No two persons will have the same experience in coming to Christ.* In the final analysis the same things take place in every case, but the manifestation, the developments, the feelings, will vary widely. A young believer who did not understand this suffered much and serious misgiving. He had a quiet experience, the sense of forgiveness coming to him as comes the morning light. When in the "love feasts" he heard others tell of the glorious dealings of the Lord with them, he was plunged into doubt and sometimes said, "If this is the way people are converted, I think I was never converted. I never had any wonderful experience like that." And many times he went away from such meetings heavy at heart and utterly cast down. He needed to know that no two people have the same experience and that there are widely varying types of experience.

Moreover, those to whom the Lord has given a remarkable and striking experience are forward to relate their experience. Paul who was met by

the Lord on the Damascus road and stricken down by the bright light which exceeded even the brightness of the eastern sun, was always pleased to tell of the Lord's dealings with him in the matter of his conversion. Peter and John came by a gradual process to the high ground which Paul reached at one bound. It is significant that neither Peter nor John ever narrated in detail their experience of grace. When there is nothing startling and extraordinary in conversion, there can be no special disposition to tell of it. Hence, it falls out that when opportunity is given to bear witness those who have something unusual to relate are first on their feet, while others are silent. The young believer referred to above did not appreciate this fact, and he took it for granted that the wonderful experiences he heard related were typical of all normal experiences. It brought him a sense of relief when it dawned on him that the experiences he heard related were for the most part exceptional and that the great number of believers had, like himself, a quiet awakening.

2. *In coming to Christ a sense of forgiveness may come either gradually or suddenly.* In a word, there are two types of experience, the distinct and sudden change, such as came to Saul of Tarsus on the Damascus road when the light shone out of heaven; and the easy, gradual change, such as came to Lydia, "whose heart the

Lord opened that she attended unto the things spoken by Paul."

The only illustration given in the Bible of the new birth is in John 3 : 8 : "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Jesus likens the change wrought by the Spirit to wind; an illustration so clear and suggestive that we cannot regret that he never gave any other. And what is wind? It may be the sweeping tornado which upturns houses and uproots trees; it may be the gentle zephyr so quiet that you are hardly sure it has touched you. The tornado and the zephyr and all the stages between are *wind*. "So is everyone that is born of the Spirit." Saul of Tarsus had the tornado type of experience; Lydia had the zephyr type.

Dr. B. H. Carroll has illustrated these extreme types thus: Two men got off a train on the Western plains in the very early morning. One of them spread out his blanket and lay down to sleep. The other man walked back and forth watching the eastern horizon for signs of the rising sun. After a time the sky reddened and the sun gradually rose clear and bright. When the sun was well up he aroused his companion, who awoke with a start. Now ask the two men when the sun rose. One will take out his watch and

tell you the very minute when his eyes first beheld the sun. The other will tell of a long vigil, of a gradual rising, and will be unable to designate any special moment.

Another has illustrated the fact of these various types of experience in this way; Jesus healed three blind men, many more, but for our present purpose we consider three. One of these came and said, "Lord, that I may receive my sight," and instantly the Lord spoke the healing word and the man saw. In another case Jesus led the blind man out of the city, and spitting on the ground, made clay and anointed his eyes. "Can you see?" and the man said, "I see men as trees walking." Jesus repeated the process, and the man cried, "I see clearly!" In yet another case Jesus anointed the eyes of one born blind and said, "Go wash in the pool of Siloam." Away the man went, groping his way, off to Siloam's pool, and, kneeling down, he bathed his eyes, and, lo, sight came, and he saw all things clearly!

Now, let us have these men on the front seat to relate their experiences. The first one starts off: "I can take you to the very place and tell you the exact time." The next man shrugs his shoulders, and says: "Well, that's strange; it didn't come to me that way." And the third cries: "Both of you are wrong; it came to me after this fashion—" After all, what difference makes it how or when or where it came, just so it came?

3. *In an experience of grace either joy or sorrow may predominate.* It is a mistake and hurtful to suppose that our coming to the Lord will necessarily bring great joy. It ought to bring joy; will always bring some measure of joy, but it may bring sorrow and this sorrow may predominate. Many who come to the Saviour are possessed and smitten with the thought of Christ's suffering and of how they have wronged him, and these thoughts wring tears from their hearts. Such sorrow can hardly be said to be less normal than great joy.

4. *The experience of the child will likely differ from that of the adult.* Has there been some disposition to force the child into the mold of the adult? Jesus said, "Except ye be converted and become as a little child." With him, it was "back to childhood;" the adult must become a child again. Do we have it, "Except ye be converted and become as an adult"? Are we disposed to expect and exact that the child shall have the experience of the man?

The child's experience of grace will probably be quiet, like a gentle zephyr. A sense of his own sinfulness and need will be awakened by the Spirit and a resolve to accept Christ as Saviour will form perhaps so gradually that the child will be unable to give any specific time as the beginning of the new life. E. G. Robinson, quoted by A. H. Strong, says, "The object of

revivals is to produce a *sound* rather than an *emotional* experience. Revivals of religion are valuable in just the proportion in which they produce rational conviction and permanently righteous action."

And yet it ought to be said that to some children with even the best Christian training there may come deep and poignant conviction for sin with severe and prolonged struggle. Dr. J. M. Frost tells of the experience of two sisters reared in the home of a devout minister. To one of them there came a sense of sin and a persuasive sense of God's love and his offer of forgiveness. It was all so quiet the child could never say at what time or how it occurred. To the other sister, near the same age, came, on the way home from church, a crushing and awful sense of sin. She begged to be taken back that very hour to the old country church. Far into the night her preacher-father and others prayed with her and instructed her until the light came, came in a mighty flood, and she rejoiced in a Saviour's love.

It will be well to give young people careful instruction concerning the fact of this possible variety of experience in coming to the Lord.

5. *There may be later experiences in Christ deeper and sweeter than the initial coming to him.* It is an unhappy wife who for assurance of her husband's love must go back to courtship days and to the words and letters of those earlier times.

That believer is in a sad state who for assurance of acceptance with his Lord must needs be forever going back through the years to some long-past experience. We are told that sometimes a blow on the head may cause a lapse of memory, perhaps may cause to drop out from memory a section or period of life; a certain year or a period of years may become a blank. If such a blow should befall one of these friends who relies upon a past bit of experience with the Lord and the year containing that bit of dealing were dropped out—.

There ought to be seasons of the Lord's nearness and experiences of his grace such as will eclipse any early joy experienced in coming to him.

6. *When we relate our experiences we unconsciously read back into them the larger and clearer views which have come to us through the passing years.* A young Christian hears the mature believer relate his first coming to the Saviour. The younger person takes it for granted that the other felt and knew at the time all that he now describes. As a matter of fact, while the now mature believer experienced all that he describes he did not at the time know of these things. He reads back into the story much that he has gathered up along the way. It may be comforting for our young people to have this fact explained to them.

RESTATEMENT.

Concerning experiences of grace.

I. No two are alike.

II. May be either gradual or sudden.

III. Joy or sorrow may predominate.

IV. Child and adult differ.

V. Later experiences may be deeper and sweeter.

VI. In relating them we read back later views and visions.

To Guide and Test Study.

Show how the example of Jesus encourages care and culture after conversion.

Name without discussion the six teachings suggested as suitable for young believers.

Why is it needful to teach that no two persons will have the same experience in coming to Christ?

Describe two types of experience. Give an illustration to show that the sense of forgiveness may come either suddenly or gradually.

"In an experience of grace either joy or sorrow may predominate." Show what is meant by this statement.

"The experience of a child is not likely to be like that of an adult." Explain and justify this statement.

What of later experiences which may come in the service of the Lord?

Why may it comfort young believers to know that older Christians unconsciously read back into their experience of grace the larger views and visions of the passing years?

XIV.

DEALING WITH YOUTHFUL DOUBT.

AS we walk along the way with young believers we will need to guide and instruct them in the matter of their doubts. Happy are we if we can stand so close to them and so hold their confidence that they will freely open their hearts to us and give us the opportunity to help them in these critical times. No more difficult and delicate task comes to the Christian worker than this of dealing with youthful doubt.

It is a well recognized fact that sooner or later there is almost sure to come in adolescence a more or less prolonged season of doubting. "In order to make a man of him nature draws him apart, bids him examine and make sure of his foundations, sets him over against his entire environment and makes him doubt and question and criticise that world in which he finds himself." Before this time he has generally accepted without question opinions and information which have been handed out to him. With his discovery of himself and the awakening of his powers, he swings out from the matter-of-fact age and the taking-for-granted age and begins to challenge and question all things. These difficulties and doubts are very real to youth, and we may not

fail to take them seriously. They are pressing out into regions untried, in paths hitherto untrod. Strangers in a strange world, there can be no wonder that they have doubts and misgivings and difficulties. This experience of doubt begins usually about the time of the entrance upon the "teen" age and is likely to reach its climax in the normal youth before he reaches twenty.

Certain types of doubt are somewhat clearly defined, chief among them being the emotional, the intellectual and the religious. The least serious of these types of doubt is that which is emotional and superficial. It grows for the most part out of certain physical and nervous reconstructions which are taking place. It will suffice to restore equilibrium, to divert the mind and to set at practical tasks which will occupy and interest.

A more serious type of doubt is the intellectual, a persistent mental attitude of question and criticism. "The ready-made world of custom, rule and convention is now required to justify itself to the mind of the youth, and if it be not founded upon the everlasting rocks he will find it out and go delving for a better foundation." At this time the youth is likely to feel himself wiser than all of his elders, and his quiet assumption of intellectual superiority over parents, elders and ancients alike, is somewhat exasperating. At this, time he grows restless under the restraints of

home, and frequently finds himself possessed by an almost irresistible impulse to leave the parental roof and go out into the world for himself. All of this is incidental to development and calls for the utmost of wise and patient dealing.

Along with this intellectual upheaval and disturbance and closely related to it is the doubt which we have designated as religious. The adolescent boy may wake up some morning with questions and sneers for the whole body of teaching which he has held from childhood. He rebels against religion and against all religious restraints. Perhaps he is communicative and frankly declares his doubts, to the grief of his parents and the consternation of his elders. Possibly he will be secretive and will carefully conceal his difficulties even from those nearest to him. Happy the youth who has parent or teacher or friend who is able to elicit his confidence and guide him through this critical time. These doubts are not to be lightly dealt with; they will hardly vanish before laughter or ridicule. The frail bark may make shipwreck or harm may come into the life which will abide in all the after years. The youth has probably come on a time when he will be satisfied with nothing less than weighty arguments and solid reasoning.

Above all, the youth needs at this time a commanding personality to walk with him and to steady him in these unsteady times; one who

believes strongly and confidently in the deep things of God. Such a personality has been the blessing and the salvation of uncounted thousands of youths.

A phase of doubt with which Christian workers are frequently called to deal concerns the question of personal acceptance with the Lord. Many who do not question the deep things of the Christian faith are yet distressed concerning their own experience of grace and are harassed with doubts as to whether they have themselves been saved. It may be helpful to consider some things which contribute to such doubts.

These doubts may grow out of *the habit of introspection.* Young people are prone to look much within, to consider unduly their own frames and feelings. In the matter of our personal salvation, scant comfort can come from looking within. The basis of our hope and our assurance lies not within us, in any merit or any feelings or experiences of our own. Such basis is in the love of God and in the atonement wrought out on the cross. Full assurance will come to the youthful believer as he is taught and trained to look away from himself, to give over the habits of introspection to which he is tempted and to rely upon the unchangeable love and promise of the Lord.

Doubt may come of *idleness in the kingdom.* Joyful assurance is impossible to us if we are not

engaged in the things of the Master. The only sure proof that we are followers of Jesus lies in the fact that we are actually following; the best evidence that we are servants of the Lord lies in the fact that we are actually serving him. "The only way to be happy in Jesus is to trust and obey." A young man came to his pastor and said, "I give it up; I think I was never converted. I wish you would have my name stricken from the church roll." The wise pastor replied, "Very well, we will see about that. Meantime, this is a busy day with me. I want you to help me. I was going to take this basket of groceries to Widow C——, but I am called away on another mission. Will you go for me?" Certainly he would go. "But what that widow and those children need more than the groceries is a vision of God and a message from his Word. I want you to take this Testament and read and pray in that home." The youth protested, declaring that he had never done such a thing. The pastor replied, "They are poor and ignorant; you can easily render this service. Promise me that you will read and pray with them. I cannot let you take the groceries unless you will do so." The promise was reluctantly made. The boy's heart was touched to see the joy of the widow and the gladness of the children as they opened the basket. He said blushingly, "I promised the pastor I would read and pray. If the children will sit

down I will do the best I can." He read about the Father's house where the many mansions are. As he read his eye stole a furtive glance around the poor, bare room, and the word of Jesus about the mansions seemed sweeter than ever before. Then they knelt to pray, and while the young man poured out his heart in prayer, the angels seemed to be hovering near. The young man walked out of that home with a sense of God's presence and goodness which he had never felt before.

Meeting the pastor later in the day, the youth who had lost assurance and had decided to drop out of the church, made report, "Pastor, I did what I promised; I read and prayed in that home and the Lord blessed us. When you want groceries delivered to a home like that, call on me. And, pastor, you need not say anything for the present about taking my name off the church book."

Put the doubter to work; give him some serious task for the Lord and for his fellows. When the doubter gets to work and warms to his tasks he ceases to doubt. These young Christians long to serve; they are in the restless, energetic age. Scarce any crime against them is greater than to leave them idle when they so desire to serve and when their service is so greatly needed. Alas, that so often these restless, energetic spirits are left without suitable tasks.

Assurance of acceptance with the Lord may be destroyed by the *doing of doubtful things.* Whoever does doubtful things will doubt. If we insist upon living close upon the border line between the church and the world, if we persist in going as far as we dare toward the things of the old life, we may not be surprised if at times we find ourselves in doubt as to which side of the line we are really on. Take for illustration a bit of incident which is related as occurring in Bristol, Tenn.-Va. The city lies on the border between the two states, the state line running down the main street of the city. A big sheriff on the Virginia side undertook to arrest a man for some misdemeanor. The man slipped across the state line and, safely out of the sheriff's jurisdiction, turned to laugh at the expense of the big sheriff. The officer was equal to the occasion; assuming a friendly air, he said, "Joe, old fellow, I was wrong to think of arresting you for so small a matter. Shake, and let's be friends!" Caught completely off his guard, the man walked up to the sheriff and clasped his hand. Instantly the sheriff's hand closed like a vise; there was a brief struggle, and the sheriff safely landed his man. If we play tag with Satan across the boundary line we are almost sure to be landed into the camp of his Satanic Majesty. If we do not so fare we must at least be disturbed and beset with doubt as to whether we really belong in the camps of the Lord.

Another fruitful source of doubt concerning our personal acceptance with the Lord is the habit of *comparing our own religious experience with the experiences of other people.* In experience meetings and elsewhere we sit and hear the wonderful dealings of God with other souls and because, forsooth, there were not given to us visions so clear and joys so marked we are prone to question whether ours is a genuine experience of grace. In the last chapter we considered at some length this question of varying religious experiences.

RESTATEMENT.

Dealing with Youthful Doubt.

Adolescence, the time for doubt.

I. Three types of doubt.
   (1) Emotional.
   (2) Intellectual.
   (3) Religious.

II. Doubt as to personal acceptance due to—
   (1) Habit of introspection.
   (2) Idleness in the kingdom.
   (3) Doing doubtful things.
   (4) Comparing religious experiences.

To Guide and Test Study.

Why are experiences of doubt likely to come in adolescence?

At what ages especially are such experiences of doubt to be expected?

What is the origin of emotional doubt and what is the remedy?

What of the intellectual doubt of this period, and how is it to be regarded?

What is the supreme need in the matter of religious doubt?

With what *phase* of doubt are Christian workers most often called to deal?

How does *introspection* tend to destroy the assurance of faith?

How does *idleness* in the kingdom produce doubt?

Why does doing doubtful things produce doubt?

XV.

AMUSEMENT PROBLEMS.

CHRISTIAN workers have long recognized that young people, and particularly young Christians, meet special peril in the pleasure zone. The restraints of the home, the burdens of business, the pressure of serious pursuits, have a steadying influence. It is in the pleasure zone where burdens are laid off and where restraints are somewhat relaxed that temptation especially assails. Young Christians in great number go astray in their religious life at the point of amusements.

Many young people are kept out of the kingdom and the church because they find themselves out of agreement with what they understand to be the standard of the church regarding certain worldly indulgence. Others who come under conviction for sin are deterred from surrender by difficulty concerning certain social customs. Yet others who had a genuine religious experience and have served the Lord are caught in currents of worldly pleasure and are swept away from the church and Christian service. There are not wanting those who love the church and indulge no thought of breaking with its service, who yet find themselves out of harmony with the position

and attitude which Christian people assume toward certain amusements. In a word, young people in great numbers are being kept from Christ or are being dwarfed in their religious life by the influences of certain social indulgences. The situation becomes the more grave in view of the fact that these social problems affect most vitally the brightest and most influential of our youth; the young man who has social gifts, the young woman who possesses beauty and social charm, the young men and women who might shine brightest for Christ, are in preëminent danger. Surely, those who would win our youth to the service of Christ must concern themselves with these questions and must walk with our young people and guide them in this realm.

As making some possible contributions toward a solution of these problems, the following observations deserve to be considered.

When it is found necessary to oppose or prohibit certain amusements, we must leave no impression that we lack sympathy with the pleasure interests of our young people. The pastor who shows no concern for the social pleasures of his young people save to condemn wrong indulgences will hardly command a sympathetic hearing for his words of condemnation. Pleasure is not in itself wrong; it is God's choice gift and provision for an imperative need of our nature. These young people are in the pleasure-seeking period.

Play and amusements form a necessary place in their lives and may contribute not only to their happiness but to their development and well-being. The discussion of these problems calls for both sympathy and sanity. Extreme positions, harsh statements, abusive language, have no proper place here. This has sometimes been an arena for abuse and assertion, rather than for faithful and intelligent Christian persuasion. If our cause is just and our positions well taken, we ought to be able to convince and persuade.

In the question of amusements, as in all other matters, young people require guidance and leading toward the right quite as much as restraint and prohibition regarding the wrong. The old principle of positive, rather than negative, teaching obtains here as everywhere else in dealing with young life. If we can only lead to innocent and wholesome pleasures we need not be much concerned about unwholesome and hurtful pleasures.

While a pastor was making a visit the small boy came in, as usual, hungry. Being hungry, he made straight for what had been a plate of apples; only or or two poor specimens remained. As the mother saw what was happening, she cried, "Don't, my boy; don't eat those bad apples." But the boy was hungry, and there seemed to be nothing better in sight, so he persisted. It looked as if there might be a domestic storm, and the

pastor was getting ready to depart. About that time a bright idea struck the distressed mother. Slipping out of the room, she came back presently with a plate of large, red apples, and set them down on the table beside the poor, stunted apples. From that moment the boy obeyed his mother implicitly, and to the end of that visit the boy made no move to touch the bad apples.

If we would win our young people from harmful amusements, we will do well to provide for them innocent and healthful amusements. It has been suggested that better results might have been obtained if our churches and pastors and deacons had spent more energy in providing normal and innocent pleasures along with their commendable efforts to check or prevent certain questionable indulgences.

We ought to make careful distinction between moral wrong and spiritual harm. There are certain indulgences which may not involve moral wrong, which yet do certainly bring spiritual harm. You may sharpen a lead pencil with a razor and perhaps do no moral wrong, but your razor would nevertheless suffer serious harm. That skilled pianist may use hands and fingers in rough work without doing moral wrong or violating one of the commandments, but he will find his ability to manipulate the piano sadly impaired. If we aspire to keep a keen edge on our spiritual life, if we long to bring heaven's sweet music

down to men, we will find that we must consider questions of spiritual harm as well as questions of actual moral wrong.

We may not be able to show young people the moral wrong that lurks in certain amusements; indeed, we may not even wish them to know concerning that moral wrong, but we can show them that the edge of their testimony may be thereby dulled and that thus they may be forbidden to bring to men the sweet strains of heavenly music.

During a revival in Baylor College, Belton, Texas, a young woman came under conviction for sin and was brought to face the question of a decision for Christ. Satan, as usual, thrust in the question of social pleasures. The girl came to one of the religious workers and said, "If I become a Christian, may I, etc.?" naming the things which are usually named under such conditions. The worker felt that here was a place to drive a sure nail, and said, "We may as well make a square issue of this matter. If you are not willing to give up these worldly amusements, you cannot be a Christian." The young woman was not convinced; indeed, no effort was made to convince her, and she felt somewhat aggrieved that she should be asked arbitrarily to give up what she regarded as innocent pleasures. She fought against the persuasions of the Spirit, and was rapidly losing her interest in spiritual things. A wiser worker learned of the situation and pur-

sued more tactful methods. "You do not wish to engage in these pleasures now, do you?" "Certainly not; I am busy with my school duties, and, besides, the laws of the college forbid it." "Then you respect and obey the laws of the college in these matters. Are you not also willing to obey the laws of Christ?" "Yes, I am, but there is my difficulty. I am not persuaded that the laws of Christ forbid these things." "Well, you do not wish to engage in these pleasures at present. It will be months before you face these problems. Why not sit down at Christ's feet and submit to him, leaving these problems to be faced in their own time?" "Would he forgive and accept me on such terms?" "Why, certainly; those are the only terms upon which he will accept you. Being a Christian means to trust him and to refer to him all the questions of daily life."

This all seemed different and attractive, and the young woman readily gave her heart to the Saviour. As the months passed, under the strong Christian influences of that mighty school, she dedicated herself to the work of foreign missions, so when the next summer came around she had no heart nor care for the pleasures and indulgences which she had formerly prized. An issue sharply and unwisely made at the previous time might have kept that splendid young woman away from the kingdom.

A pastor's wife, a woman of rare charm and power in spiritual things, said awhile ago, "If my church and pastor had not been wise enough to avoid an issue with me on the amusement problems during my girlhood days, I think I should have made spiritual shipwreck."

It is by no means intended that authority is not to be exercised or that church discipline is to be neglected. Both authority and discipline are essential and perhaps both are sadly relaxed in our day; authority and discipline are most effective, however, when they can guide safely along perilous ways, avoiding untimely issues and open breaks.

We will need to guide our young people in using the Bible in the solution of these problems. Young Christians often make the mistake of supposing that the Bible is a book of statutes in which are to be found definite laws condemning all things which are wrong. Hence, they come asking for chapter and verse in which this or that is said to be wrong. "I will not engage in this if you will show me in the Bible that it is wrong." Clearly they have a wrong conception of the Bible. It gives no complete catalogue of indulgences which we are to avoid. If it had done this for its own day, it would have been obsolete and out-of-date for every age since.

Little children require rules and specific prohibition; as they grow older principles are

grasped by which the various problems of life are to be solved. The Bible brings us certain principles, in the application of which we are to find a solution for every problem that confronts us. It may suffice here to mention a few of these broad principles and indicate the manner of their application.

All *doubtful things* must be avoided. "He that doubteth is condemned if he eat" (Rom. 14: 23). Paul is discussing the propriety of eating meats offered to idols. He declares that it is not wrong so to do, but, "He that doubteth is condemned if he eat." To do a thing concerning whose rightness or propriety we are in doubt is wrong. So long as we are in doubt we may not proceed. If in the matter of social indulgences and amusement problems we have doubts, we may not indulge until we have satisfied ourselves that the way is clear and that in our indulgence we will do no wrong. This one principle faithfully applied will settle many questions in social life.

All things must be avoided *which dim the light with which we shine*. "Ye are the light of the world" (Matt. 5: 14). Our mission, our business in the world, is to shine. All about us men grope in the darkness and are lost. We are left here to give light to these lost, wandering souls. Any act or indulgence which will impair the brightness of the light with which we shine is, of course, forbidden; nay, we should in good conscience gladly

deny to ourselves any such pleasure. Questions of amusement and indulgence must be decided in the light of our Christian influence. If we have applied the first test and find that no doubt exists as to the innocence of the thing proposed, we must apply this second test and determine its possible effect in dimming the light of our Christian life.

Abstinence for the sake of others. All things are to be avoided, however innocent and harmless to ourselves, which bring harm to others. "If meat maketh my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth" (1 Cor. 8: 13). Here Paul is discussing the meat offered to idols, which he has declared it is not wrong to eat. But, he says, my brother may be weaker than I and not so well informed, and because he is in doubt or for other reasons, it may be sin for him to eat such meat. "Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend." Abstinence for the sake of weaker people is more than a duty; it is a glorious privilege. We may not do that in social life which will do harm to people weaker than ourselves. This principle may help us in many a perplexity.

These are but a few out of the many principles laid down in the Bible by which we may solve the problems of daily life. Many questions in social life do not, perhaps, involve right and wrong,

so much as they involve expediency and propriety. How much of ourselves and our time may we give to recreation and pleasure? What effect will certain pleasures, apparently innocent and harmless, have upon our finer sensibilities. What is worth while in social life in view of our high purpose to develop the purest and best Christian character?

Normal adults do not wish to keep back young life from pleasure and innocent amusements. They recognize that these are natural and necessary; they will encourage and provide for innocent amusements as the best and only real safeguard against things harmful. They will at the same time seek to keep pleasure in its own subordinate place, leading the growing youth to set his heart increasingly on the highest and holiest ideals.

RESTATEMENT.

Amusement Problems.

Young people are thus—

(1) Kept away from Christ.
(2) Deterred when under conviction.
(3) Swept away from the church.
(4) Disturbed in religious life.

I. Recognize necessity of pleasure.

II. Guide, do not simply restrain.

III. Distinguish between moral wrong and spiritual harm.

IV. Avoid direct issues if possible.

V. Guide in use of the Bible.

1. The Bible brings us broad principles by which every problem in life may have solution.
2. Illustrations of these principles.
   (1) Doubtful things are sinful.
   (2) Ye are the light of the world.
   (3) Abstinence for the sake of others.

To Guide and Test Study.

Why are amusement problems of consequence?

What five general suggestions are made relative to dealing with these problems?

Why should we be careful to make it clear that we do not oppose pleasure in itself?

What is your impression as to the suggestion that we should provide innocent amusements in order to counteract the evil? What might be done in this direction in your community?

State and illustrate the distinction between moral wrong and spiritual harm.

Why should direct issues with young people be avoided as far as possible? Give an illustration.

What is the nature of the guidance found in the Bible concerning these problems?

Name the three Bible principles set forth and show how each may be applied to problems of amusement.

XVI.

THE YOUNG BELIEVER AND THE LARGER CHRISTIAN LIFE.

WHEN we have brought to confession and baptism, we have not completed our task; We have only fairly begun. We have not reached the goal; we have only made a start toward the goal. The teacher who said, "I want to give up my class because now they are all saved," had a poor conception of the real ends at which we aim.

A pastor was doing some missionary work in the mountains of Kentucky. He visited a home where a minister had never been before. When he arose to leave, his attention was directed to a poor little babe in a crude crib. There were evidences that years had passed over the child. The father said, "This is our great sorrow. Nine years ago this baby came to our home, and we looked to see him grow; the years have passed and there has been no growth." The pastor walked down the mountain side, thinking of that great sorrow. He was thinking yet further—how the Christ went down into the shadows of death to redeem the lost and of how many times he sits beside the spiritual cradle and waits for growth and fruits when, alas, there is no growth and no fruit!

When we bring a soul into the kingdom we have merely a babe. It is now our task to bring this babe through the stages of growth, from infancy to youth, from youth to maturity, from maturity to full manhood and perfection in the Lord. Measured by the standard of numbers, Jesus would hardly be regarded as a greatly successful soul-winner. At the close of his ministry he had perhaps a few more than five hundred converts. It is not difficult to see that he gave himself preeminently, not to making converts, but to making lives. With what patience and persistence he sought to build himself, his own life and character, into the handful of men who followed him!

Paul, measured by any standard, could fairly be regarded as a great winner of souls. But Paul gave himself most largely to the winning of those whom he had won. "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you." When Paul had gone through a circuit of cities making converts, he did not push out into further circuits, making yet other converts; rather, he carefully retraced his steps, ministering to the converts he had made and seeking to reproduce in them the Christ life.

When we have brought the children to Christ, a simple and easy task, we have then the long and difficult task of training and developing. Some teachers have peculiar zeal and gifts for evangelism. In a few cases these gifts have

been so marked that it has been thought well to keep the teacher with classes in which are a goodly number of unsaved pupils. Other teachers have the fine qualities of character which fit them to be companions for timid Christian youth. Yet it is perhaps true to say that the instinct to win and the instinct to nurture cannot be entirely apart from each other. When God gives motherhood he gives also the instinct to mother. When God plants the disposition to win souls, he plants with that disposition the impulse to nurture the souls which have been won.

The young believer is to be comforted and supported in the Christian life. If he has come to Christ early he has before him many years of immaturity in which he will require patient and loving oversight. It is easy to discourage him by exacting requirements and critical attitudes. The better elements of child nature will hardly respond to chiding, such as, "See what you have done, and you pretend to be a Christian, too!" Somewhere in the period of adolescence there is likely to come with the boy and even with the girl a season of rebellion against authority, perhaps of waywardness. Many youths of strength and promise have gone on the rocks because parents and teachers failed of forbearance in this crucial time. I make here no plea against home or church discipline, rather I plead for wise and patient watchcare. The church, like the home,

will suffer long, and by all possible means will seek to avoid an open break with the restless, unsteady youth. These youths will try the teacher's soul by their irreverence; they will grieve the pastor by sitting on the back seats and talking while he preaches; they will be and do many things which hardly adorn the Christian life, but they are, nevertheless, to be loved and helped and guided by wise and strong spirits who have not forgotten how the world looked to them when they were in this period of life.

The young believer is to be led to seek training in the Baptist Young People's Union. If he is converted in his early "teens" he should be induced to unite with the Junior B. Y. P. U. If the church has no such organizations, those who are concerned for the development of Christian youth should lead off in forming such societies.

A right attitude of sympathy and helpfulness on the part of the superintendent and the teachers in the Sunday school toward the B. Y. P. U. and the Junior B. Y. P. U. would in many instances solve their most difficult problems and set them in the way to have high times in their B. Y. P. U. work. Let all of the constructive forces of the church rally to bind young believers to the training service of the church, let them have a clear vision of what this training may mean in practical usefulness in all the later years, let them by prayer and counsel guide these young

people in their efforts, and they will find in the B. Y. P. U. a fruitful source of trained workers for all lines of practical church service.

The young believer is to be directed toward the denominational school for his college training. He is to be inspired to seek a higher education. Happily, poverty is in these days no insuperable barrier; indeed, save in the rarest cases and perhaps in none, are there insurmountable difficulties in the path of the aspiring youth who thirsts for higher learning. Urge this fact upon the youth of your acquaintance, in season and out of season. Such a seed-thought dropped into the mind at an opportune time has started many fine youths in the way to the larger things.

And when the question of the choice of an institution arises be ready with a good word for your own denominational school. All things considered, such school is likely to be the best for the youth whose Christian development and usefulness you seek. Whether or not your young friend contemplates a college course, send his name to the president of your denominational college, and ask him to send a letter and literature setting forth the reasons why a young Christian should seek by higher education to fit himself for the largest usefulness. Such a letter coming to a young person on the threshold of life may bless in many ways, even if that person shall never feel that the way is open to a college course. And

when the young believer returns from college, whether on vacation or permanently, let every effort be made to help him to fit back into the church life and find a place of service. The complaint is sometimes made that our young people returning from academy and college do not assume the obligations and duties of church life. Possibly the difficulty lies partly in the fact that tactful efforts are not made to enable these young people to find themselves in the new life and to guide them to tasks worthy of their hands.

The young believer is to be guided in the choice of a life occupation. Earlier perhaps than we think, the adolescent boy is pondering the question of a life business. He is not to be ridiculed or sneered at because he takes this question to heart even though it be years before the matter can be finally determined. Much can be done toward directing the thought toward the higher and more useful occupations.

Especially are the claims of the Christian ministry to be pressed upon those of our Christian boys and young men who seem to possess qualities which might fit them for usefulness as heralds of the cross. The most urgent need of our churches and of the Christianity of our day is more and better preachers. Now, if ever, we should be praying to the Lord of the harvest to thrust out more laborers into the harvest. And when we pray in earnest we will cast about to

help answer our own prayer. A kindly hand on the shoulder with the earnest inquiry as to whether the claims of the gospel ministry have ever been duly considered has started numbers of youths toward special service. Some who know from personal experience may urge the joys of the ministry, and all of us may urge the high privileges and unsurpassed opportunities for contributing to the well being of our fellows.

To young women many avenues of Christian work are open, and every Christian girl should be brought to face the question of preparing for some special service. Many young women are choosing lines of community or missionary activity in which they may receive sufficient wages for a livelihood, while others seek training for particular lines of usefulness with no thought of remuneration. Both for young men and young women the mission fields of the earth are waiting white unto the harvest.

The young believer should be brought to know, and to participate in, general denominational work. Pastors and teachers would do well to strive to make every young Christian in their charge an active, efficient denominational worker. This goal will not be reached save by painstaking and intelligent effort.

The methods and policies of our denominational organization are exceedingly simple: (1)

All are familiar with the formation and organization of the local church. (2) These local churches in a given county or limited section send messengers to form the district association. (3) Messengers from the churches and the district associations in turn send messengers to constitute the state convention or association. (4) The churches, the associations and state conventions join in sending messengers to constitute the Southern Baptist Convention. These organizations are designed to make possible coöperative effort for missions, education, benevolence and reform work. They possess no authority over the churches, but rather derive their rights and powers from the churches. Surely our young people who shortly must assume the responsibilities for all church activities should be informed with reference to these policies and principles of denominational endeavor. Even in their early Christian life they may be chosen to represent the church in the district association, and asked to bring back to the church some report of the proceedings and of their impressions.

In like manner our women have a complete system and organization for denominational effort. Induce the Christian girl growing into womanhood to put her life into touch with this mighty movement of her Christian sisters, and you may render to her and to the kingdom of God a far-reaching service.

The following outlines may be filled out and indefinitely enlarged upon. They may be used as the basis for the fullest instruction on the structure of our denominational life.

Baptist organization for service:

1. The individual.
2. The church.
3. The district association.
4. The state convention.
5. The Southern Baptist Convention.

Lines of service:

1. Personal and social.
2. Civic duty and reforms.
3. Benevolence.
4. Education.
5. Missions.

The young believer should be equipped to teach the Bible. For himself and for others the teaching of the Bible is a fundamental service. Happily this path of usefulness is open to practically all of our young people if they will but equip themselves for it. The Convention Normal Course, both in its message and its methods, is especially adapted to prepare young Christians for the teaching of the Word. This course sets forth the most approved methods for the organization and management of the Bible school; it

presents basal studies in Sunday school psychology or pupil study; it develops the vital principles of the art of teaching; it offers carefully prepared and adapted studies in Bible doctrines and Bible history. Already our denominational schools are offering these Normal Courses, and it is confidently believed that young people into the many thousands will in local churches, in training school, in encampments, be speedily enrolled for these studies with a view to know and be able to teach the Word of Life.

The young believer is to be made an intelligent advocate of missionary effort.

Missions, the carrying of the evangel to the whole world, is the chief business of every believer and is the chief end of every church. If we do all the things herein proposed for our young believer and fail to grow in him an abiding purpose to lay out the resources of his purse, of his brain and life, for the carrying of the gospel to the whole world we have fallen short of our privilege and our obligation.

RESTATEMENT.

THE YOUNG BELIEVER AND THE LARGER CHRISTIAN LIFE.

Conversion and culture.

Example of Jesus and of Paul.

I. To be comforted and supported in the Christian life.

II. To be led to the B. Y. P. U. for training.
III. To be directed toward the denominational school.
IV. To be guided in choice of life occupation.
V. Should be brought to know denominational life.
VI. Should be equipped to teach the Bible.
VII. Should be made an intelligent advocate of missionary effort.

To Guide and Test Study.

What of our task when we have brought to Christ? Illustrate by the example of Jesus and of Paul.

Discuss the duty to comfort and support young converts.

What should be the attitude of the superintendent and teachers toward the B. Y. P. U.?

What may we do for the young believer in the matter of higher education?

What of guiding the young in the matter of a life occupation? What of urging the claims of the Christian ministry? What of special service for young women?

State the method and policy of our denominational organization. How may we enlist our youth in denominational work?

What of teaching the Bible? What special opportunity is offered for equipment?

What of the young believer and missions?

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND EXAMINATION.

These questions may, at the close of the study, be assigned as a special lesson. Careful and constant review, at each recitation, of all the preceding lessons, will bring the class to this final test already prepared. At least sixteen questions, one for each chapter, should be selected from those given below for the examination. Pupils making a grade of 70 per cent are given appropriate seal for their diploma.

I.

1. Name five possible designations for the studies proposed, and tell why each is unsatisfactory.
2. Why do we adopt "Winning to Christ?"

II.

3. Discuss five reasons for the study of our theme.

III.

4. State the "culture theory" regarding the child. Name four different views of this theory.
5. State and defend the "conversion theory."
6. Name three things not "the supreme need." In what four senses do we need Christ?

IV.

7. Discuss the question, "Is the child religious"?
8. Discuss, "Is the child in the kingdom of God?"
9. Is the child "God's child"?
10. Is the child "saved"?

V.

11. Name five requisites to successful evangelism.
12. Who should be trained with a view to evangelism? What special information is desirable, and how may it be secured?
13. Tell something of the "content of truth" which we are to teach with special view to evangelism.

VI.

14. Name habits which hinder conversion.
15. Name habits which contribute to early conversion.
16. Discuss two methods for securing attendance of children and young people on the preaching services.

VII.

17. Name at least five suggestions as to "Winning to Christ through the Sunday school."
18. How may grading contribute to evangelism?
19. Why use young converts in our efforts for others?

VIII.

20. Name six suggestions for dealing with individuals.
21. Why deal with the individual alone?
22. Name some difficulties to deal with.

IX.

23. Why use the Bible in winning to Christ?
24. How use the Bible in winning to Christ?
25. Quote (1) two passages which may be used to produce conviction; (2) two passages suitable to bring to a decision; (3) two passages which show the duty of public confession.

X.

26. Why are lost men not saved? Make two suggestions for dealing with those who have no conviction of sin; give at least two passages of Scripture which may be used to produce conviction.
27. Indicate four difficulties which keep men away from Christ, giving Scriptures for use in each case.
28. What instruction shall we give those who desire to be saved, but do not know the way of life?

XI.

29. Discuss how early the child may properly be baptized.
30. State some possible reasons why parents may oppose the baptism of their children.

31. How may we coöperate with parents in this matter of winning children to Christ?

XII.

32. Name five things concerning the church which ought to be taught to young converts.
33. What is the act of baptism? What is its design? Give reason for your answer in each case.
34. Name three things concerning the supper which ought to be taught to young Christians.

XIII.

35. Name at least five of the six teachings which we may impart to young believers as regards the matter of a religious experience.
36. Give illustrations to show how the sense of forgiveness may come either suddenly or gradually.
37. How is the experience of a child likely to differ from that of an adult?

XIV.

38. In what life-period may we expect especial distress from doubt?
39. Name types of doubt and which type is most serious.
40. Name four fruitful sources of doubt as regards personal acceptance with the Lord.

XV.

41. Name some serious results which grow out of questionable amusements.
42. Give five suggestions as to dealing with these problems.
43. State three principles laid down in the Bible which may help us to solve these problems.

XVI.

14. Discuss seven obligations which rest upon Christian workers as regards young believers.

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